

GENERAL MEETING 2014

JANUARY 2014: GENERAL MEETING

David Brailsford from Nottingham Storytellers related some very humorous stories which went down a treat.

FEBRUARY 2014: GENERAL MEETING

Our February speaker was Simon Brown, Artefacts Loans Officer from Nottingham City Museums and Galleries. Simon is in charge of the 11000 objects in the Museum's 'Handling Objects' collection. The collection is mainly based on social history and everyday objects from the last two hundred years, but is expanding to include a world cultures collection.

It also has around 400 wildlife specimens (mainly stuffed animals, birds and fishes). He challenged us to identify some of the objects in the collection, and we were pretty good, but none of us identified a 19th Century skirt clip and not many knew the 1950's toaster. Simon conveyed his enthusiasm to us in a very effective and humorous talk and delighted over 140 of us with the contents of a couple of his sets of objects.



APRIL 2014: GENERAL MEETING

Our April speaker was Mark Patterson who gave us a talk on Roman Nottinghamshire. It was really unfortunate that the public address system was really playing up and not many of us could hear him. For those who could hear, Mark gave a fascinating talk with lots of detail about the forts, camps and Roman farms which have now almost completely disappeared from our countryside. After the event, several members of the committee got ourselves trained up in the mysteries of the microphones and, fingers crossed, we shouldn't have sound problems in the future.

The featured interest group was the photography group who showed off a selection of photos and also a collection of old cameras – some of which were just like the ones we've got lurking in a cupboard or the attic!



MAY 2014: GENERAL MEETING

We welcomed the return of Tony Horton, a vastly entertaining and enthusiastic speaker. Tony had us singing along to the top favourite children's songs of yesteryear. He also took us on a sentimental journey to the glorious days of black and white television themes and even before then, to the time when radios were the size of fridge freezers.

Our featured interest group were the reading and poetry groups who provided a magnificent display of images, quotes and photos to illustrate what they do. It just goes to show: if you can make a display on reading, you can make a display on any of our interest groups.

JUNE 2014: GENERAL MEETING

Graham Keal provided a humorous and relaxed account of his 40 year career as a show business journalist. Numerous anecdotes included conversations with Oprah, David Attenborough and Eric Morecombe.

He also described the 'tractor beam of concentrated eye contact' from the (female) celeb which could persuade any (male) fan to think that 'he just might have a chance', irrespective of bad teeth, falling out hair and a bit of a paunch. And this was when celebs were famous for their ability, not just for being famous!

Our featured interest group was the sewing group who showed off some of their wonderful range of projects.



JULY 2014: GENERAL MEETING

In July, our speaker was well known local author David Bell, who gave us an amusing and very animated story of local garden privies – toilet humour, but in a good way. He had a huge fund of humorous anecdotes, including the landowner whose loos had square cut holes, to discourage lingering and the hen who gave the phrase ‘hen pecked’ a whole new meaning when she nested in the privy bucket.

Our featured interest group was Trips and Visits, with a great display of just some of their many expeditions. We are very fortunate in having such an energetic convenor in Sue Fairweather and an active team.

AUGUST 2014: GENERAL MEETING

In August, our speaker was Harry Parkes who spoke very movingly about the young men who were conscripted to go down the mines during WW2 and about his long and successful struggle to have them recognised and commemorated. No records were kept; there were no medals or demob suits, but without their efforts, Britain would have run out of coal at a critical point in the war. 48000 Bevan Boys helped to keep the coalfields working at full capacity after many thousands of miners opted to join the armed services, and this form of conscription lasted until 1948.

Through the miracles of modern technology, we were able to share in Harry’s evident delight when Graeme pulled up picture of Harry being hugged by Princess Sophie at the opening of the Bevan Boys’ memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum.

Our featured interest group was Bridge, which is now thriving and which meets very Wednesday.

SEPTEMBER 2014: GENERAL MEETING

Our guest speaker at the September meeting was Stuart Dickson, who took us through “A year in the flower garden”. Stuart’s talk and presentation starting in Spring and worked through each season in turn. Stuart is a former lecturer at Nottingham Trent University and broadcasts on Radio Nottingham. He showed us his own garden and house, which had not been tended for 30 years before he took it on (all the brambles). He picked out particular flowers, giving hints on propagation and looking after them using examples of Primulas, Irises, Rudbeckias and Dahlias from his garden.

As he went along, the tips about individual plants came thick and fast (I picked up clues about where I was going wrong with my Maples). Amongst Stuart’s little known facts was that Musk was said to be an aphrodisiac but he had been wearing it for 16 years – and nothing!

OCTOBER 2014: GENERAL MEETING

At the October General Meeting Jane Pavier announced that she has stepped down from her role of Chairman to concentrate on other U3A activities. Many thanks to Jane for guiding the Carlton and Gedling U3A from its inception to past its second Birthday, during which time it has grown from strength to strength. The role of Chairman (and the official Cowbell of Office) have been handed over to Tom Grainger. We wish Tom every success in his new venture.

Earlier in the meeting Jane had been taken by surprise when a Flash Mob organised by the Choir and Making Music for Fun Interest Groups performed an impromptu version of I’d like to Teach the World to Sing. (It’s not known if sales of carbonated drinks have increased in the Carlton area since then!). You can see some video footage of the performance on YouTube by clicking the following link:

[Flash Mob: It's the Real Thing!](#)

Jane Pavier is part of the U3A Nottinghamshire Development Group within the U3A structure who identified this area as being suitable to set up a U3A and did the work to organise the first meeting of Carlton & Gedling U3A in 2012. She was installed as the Chairman of the Steering Committee to lead and guide the fledgling volunteers of that first committee because she is steeped in U3A procedures and always able to tell us the correct way to do things. That proved to be invaluable leadership and guidance.

It has not been a good year for Jane on personal matters and she rightly felt a need to back off a little on her commitments. That said, Jane retains the Chairmanship of the Notts. Network of U3As, still does the Development Group, still a member of 3 U3As, very much a U3A activist. I would not be surprised to see Jane re-appear at some stage setting up another new U3A to add to her collection. Thank you Jane.



NOVEMBER 2014: GENERAL MEETING

An educational and interesting talk from **Danny Wells**, our Guest Speaker, about the history of Thomas Cook and Son – the most famous travel agency in the world. Danny told us that the whole idea of organising trips arose out of Thomas Cook's staunch Baptist and Temperance views in the Victorian era.

The early excursions were to take people to fresh air at the seaside or to spa towns for health. The other side of the business was a Temperance Hotel in Leicester. (Thomas Cook himself was born in Melbourne, Derbys.) Queen Victoria's obsession with Scotland was a great boon to the young travel company. The Great Exhibition of 1851 gave Cook the further chance to take excursions to “educate the people”.

As Thomas Cook was an idealistic man who ran the company badly but for worthy reasons, his son John Mason Cook took over and developed it into the worldwide business it became – issuing the first Travellers Cheques, getting involved in the logistics of wars. Old Thomas was not happy with the way it was going and spent his great wealth on philanthropy, dying with only £2000 to his name.

DECEMBER 2014: GENERAL MEETING

We had our third Christmas party General Meeting which went well. We welcomed a distinguished guest, the Mayor of Gedling - Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth, who spent time with us and addressed the meeting. She talked about the importance of keeping older people active and healthy – which is, of course, what the U3A is all about. It's good for our U3A to have some recognition after just two and a half years since we began. It's also good to remind ourselves that we have about 30 Interest Groups running (including the Theatre and Trips which have all sorts of different events within those headings). The groups vary in the level of physical or mental activity and sociability, so that there is something for everyone to try. That growth in two and a half years is because you, the members, have come forward to organise groups and events. That is the simplicity of the self-help essence of U3A.