

This month join us at our Open Meeting
on

Tuesday 2nd July
10.00 am at The Arena
Ilkeston

When we will welcome our
speaker:

**Alan Williams of Tean Valley
Meadows:**
**Talk and DVD showing the
development and success of the
nature reserve in attracting varied
birds and wildlife**

Doors open at 9.45 am
Refreshments available

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Coming soon to our Open Meetings

6th August: Gerald Price—an illustrated talk on the Woodland Trust and the importance of woodlands

3rd September: Peter Stubbs—speaking about The History of Crime in England over 1000 years.

1st October: Interest Groups Fair

5th November: Trustees Week. Derbyshire is far from the coast. Yet the county has many connections with the sea—talk by Liz Keeley.

*** IMPORTANT ***

Please note: All those attending the monthly meetings must sign in at either of the two desks at the entrance to the meeting hall of The Arena. This is necessary so that we know how many have attended and, even more important, **it is required to comply with fire regulations.** If you arrive early, before the signing-in sheet is available, please make sure you return to the desk later to sign in.

Find us on
Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1226535837801301>

Letter from the Chair



Hello Members!

At last Summer has arrived, in all its splendour. Our outdoor activities are in full swing with members enjoying the Garden Group, a round of Golf, the season's start for Flat Green Bowls (lovely to see the write up in Ilkeston Life) and Rambling, not rained off for once.

With delight I offer a very warm welcome to our 12 newest members who joined us recently (well, to be precise, 11 new members and 1 returning member); Alison, Debbie, Kate, Loendi, Lilian, Mary, Paula, Pat, Patricia, Susan, Val and Yvonne. I'm sure they'd all appreciate getting to know other members, so existing members please don't be shy in making yourself known to them and others. Thank you!

A New Members Coffee Morning was held at The Observatory on Wednesday 19th June and it was lovely to talk to those who came. I was asked how one finds out about the Volunteering Opportunities within u3a so there is more information on this further in the newsletter. Thank you for asking!

The Committee approved a new *Accessibility Policy* at their June meeting which you'll find on the website. As part of this we are looking for someone with an interest in this area to act as an adviser/contact point. Please speak to Christine or Alyson if you are interested in finding out more. Thank you.



June was a special time for Ilkeston u3a with National Volunteers Week giving us the opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge all our Volunteers. As part of that we did some local promotion of u3a with a week-long static display at Ilkeston Library and a morning at Ilkeston Hospital. But the best fun was getting together at an Appreciation Event on 4th June including cake and certificates!

Erewash Sounds, our local radio station, invited u3a to talk about what we do and Alyson and Steven gave a lively and informative rendition of our activities. You can listen to the playback at <https://www.erewashsound.com/listen-again?s=ilkeston+u3a>

Nationally, there is an imminent leadership change with a new Chair to take over at Third Age Trust AGM. There are 3 candidates for the role and you can read their Supporting Statements at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/agm-2024>. If you wish to add your voice **before 11th July**, please send the name of your chosen candidate to chair@ilkestonu3a.org.uk and this will be included into your committee's deliberations. Ilkeston u3a's nominee will be casting our vote shortly after.

And, finally, don't forget the other u3a activities that you can engage in as part of your membership. Check out what's happening at our Cluster/Reciprocal partners; Beeston, Derby, Long Eaton, & Stapleford, and there is also a fabulous range of online talks and events to explore nationally, see <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events>

Take care, everyone. See you at **Open Meeting, 10am, 2nd July**.

Christine Keighley, Chair

Ilkeston u3a Celebrates Volunteers Week



Ilkeston u3a Volunteers Being Recognised at Volunteers Week Ceremonies

Volunteers' Week, which is celebrated annually across the nation by UK charities during the first week of June, is an important event in our own diary. Believe it or not, Ilkeston u3a has more than 60 volunteers (whom we refer to as STARS) in the organisation including activity group leaders, committee members, refreshments organisers, numerous meet-and-greet personnel and additional people who donate their time by 'buddying-up' with new members.



Volunteers were recognised for their individual achievements during the year at a special awards ceremony held on 4 June following the general meeting. Each volunteer received a commemorative certificate, awarded by the Ilkeston u3a Chairperson, Christine Keighley. The awards ceremony was then followed by a luncheon, which by all accounts was a roaring success!

We would encourage anyone who wishes to become part of the STARS team, to contact one of the committee members and indicate what you would like to become involved in. All Members Welcome!!

Steven Schmidt
Ilkeston u3a

Radio Interview on Erewash Sound



Steven Schmidt (Vice Chair) and Alyson Marriott (Business Secretary) were interviewed for 30 minutes about Ilkeston u3a, by Paul Stacey on 29th May 2024, which can be heard back on link below.

<https://www.erewashsound.com/listen-again?s=u3a>

Appeal for Help

!! Are you aware that I run our website single handedly? !!

As you may appreciate, this could have very **serious repercussions** for our website due to the fact that if something happens to me there'll be no one to maintain or run it - **and I'm not getting any younger!**

Is there anyone who feels suitably or even partially qualified to assist me? Even some knowledge of websites would be useful and if you have knowledge of coding this would be super helpful although not essential.

Training will be provided to anyone who feels they may be able to help and, of course, I am happy to do some 'on-the-job' training myself. Some of you may know that I'm a former IT Lecturer and so am perfectly qualified to assist with and drive your training.

Please email me if you think you can help. **Thank you.**

Ann Shoebridge

webmaster@ilkestonu3a.org.uk

Volunteering at Ilkeston u3a



Ilkeston u3a is member-led.

That means that all that we enjoy happens because members put forward their knowledge, skills, experience, or interest in some way to help the organisation tick.

Everyone has something to offer, whether that be occasionally, when they are able or when they are needed, or longer term, for instance

being a Group Leader, or joining the Committee. And, by longer term, this doesn't mean a life sentence! It could be leading a group for a while, or serving a year helping on the committee. Members should take their turn in helping out. Lots of members do lots of things within Ilkeston u3a and a **BIG SHOUT OUT** to them. Ilkeston u3a would not exist otherwise.

If you would like to get more involved see the graphic for ways Volunteers help. Of course, you may have a new idea, and any committee member will be all ears to receive them, or add your name to the Volunteer team. You can also email chair@ilkestonu3a.org.uk



Interest Groups Round-up

Brush Strokes Thank you to members of Brush Strokes Group for letting us see some of their artwork. The first three pieces are by John Osborn.



A pink Camelia from John's garden, planted last Spring. Another garden plant—an Aeonium "Swarzkopf". Both paintings are unfinished. Lastly, an interpretation of an olive grove on the Greek island of Paxos, from a photo taken during a holiday. John used small natural sponges dipped in watercolour paints to see what the effect would be.



Two by Marie Radons: a painting of her daughter and a watercolour.

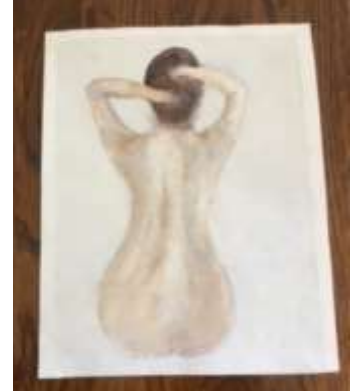
A watercolour by Ellen Marooney-Smith



Three by Glen Pickering: Cromer, painted in acrylic. The golden eagle and "Bee Helping Himself" are in watercolour.

Interest Groups Round-up

Brush Strokes continued



The final three paintings are watercolours by Maureen Whitbread.

Glen Pickering
On behalf of **Brush Strokes Group**

Play Reading

We meet on the first and third Friday of each month 1.30 to 4.15 pm, at the fire station. We do usually finish before 4.15 and you don't need to stay to the end if you have something else to go on to. You also don't need to come twice a month if you can't manage to. We're all included in the plays and it's great fun. If you haven't done this before, that's not a problem, most of us hadn't when we started. Nobody is going to criticise you.

So, if you feel you'd like to try it, please contact me.



Sue Widdowson

Interest Groups Round-up

Garden Group



For the May meeting members of the group, and a couple of members from the Long Eaton Garden Group, visited Lea Gardens at Matlock. The gardens have been in existence for some time and are famous for their displays of rhododendrons and azaleas. The evolving of the gardens dates back to John Marsden-Smedley, local squire and owner of John Smedley Ltd., the woollen garments manufacturer, who spent much of his life in the village of Lea. He had a great love of plants and for trial purposes, planted rhododendrons in various areas of his land, which proved an ideal sheltered position for establishing them, and which is now Lea Gardens. He also planted varieties of trees which gave the necessary wind protection and partial shade for the rhododendrons.

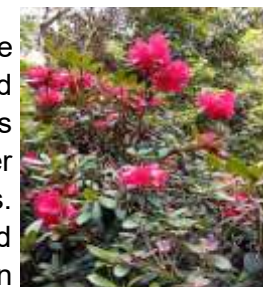
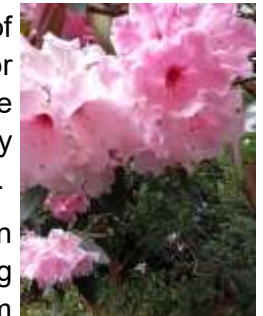
Therefore in 1935 he was inspired to build his own rhododendron garden on a site behind his existing garden which originally was an old quarry. Stones from it were used for paths and verandas in dry stone walling style. The sand based beds were topped up with soil from parts of his estate and ash from the furnaces of his woollen mill. A collection was started and records kept show plants from leading growers and breeders of the 1930's. He subsequently collected 350 varieties of hybrid rhododendrons and azaleas in a 2 acre site which was developed up to his death in 1959.

The estate was then divided and sold and the rhododendron gardens were acquired by Peter and Nancy Tye. They were later joined by John Smedley's estate manager, Joyce Colyer, who contributed her expertise and knowledge of the gardens and contents. Nancy Tye had a flair for rockery and garden design and created alpine screes to complement the rhododendron collection. New areas of the garden were developed with rock screes, ornamental shrubs and trees and in 1960 Nancy and Joyce opened the

gardens to the public.

Peter and Nancy's son Jon and his wife Jenny took over the running of the gardens in 1980 and the size increased significantly with the addition of varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas and more involvement in plant propagation and sales. The Tea Shop was opened at this time which was enlarged in 2007. Their son Peter is now responsible for the day to day running of the gardens.

Unfortunately we did not see the gardens at their best as a lot of the plants had dropped their flowers but there were still a few that were flowering. As we know the seasons are changing and 2/3 weeks earlier would have seen a magnificent display. However it was an enjoyable visit, rounded off with lunch from the tea room and, due to the good weather, we were able to sit outside.



Barbara Bailey

Interest Groups Round-up

Rambling



After torrential rain a few days before our June ramble, it was decided that the planned route would be too waterlogged in places. Instead, we had a very pleasant walk around Shipley Park on a rare warm, sunny day. Colin, our leader for this walk, always seems to find some paths and areas that we haven't used before, or maybe they just looked different at this time of year. The park was looking really lush and green, especially with the long grasses and vegetation and the very full and leafy trees after all the rain. The new People's Wood, planted by the Junior Forest Rangers is thriving and will be a wonderful



addition to the park as the trees mature. This area has been closed to the public for some time, but footpaths have now been re-opened.

We are so lucky to have this facility right on our doorstep, for a scenic view and a breath of fresh air.



Janis Henshaw

What you Wanted to Share

Iona - Isle of Deep Peace, Faith and Tranquillity By Janet Reeve

Mystical, mesmerizing
Magical memories,
Full of haunting, transitory
Mysterious sounds.
Sounds
Floating in the air,
Ebbing and flowing
Like the tides
Surrounding
This spiritual pin-prick
In the ocean of life.



Ocean,
Clear greeny-blue waters
Reflecting the azure-blue of the
Sky
Shimmering on the sunlit Atlantic.
Ocean,
Contrasting suddenly, without warning,
Misty moisture
Obliterating sea and sky,
Obscuring Mull,
Isolating Iona,
Accentuating
Its immortal mystery.

Commanding the skyline
Benedictine Abbey,
The Faith of years
Ensclosed
Within ancient porous walls.
Faint chanting
Of Benedictine Friars
Seeping through,
Bombarding our ears.
Eerie, echoing sounds
Of the Past.
Strange Celtic imagery
Leaping out from crosses
And gravestones,
All reminders of Gaelic Heritage.



**Iona
Full of
Mystical, mesmerising, magical
Memories.**