

This month join us at our

Open Meeting

on

Tuesday 7th April

**10.00 am–12 noon at
The Arena, Ilkeston**

Our speaker this month is:

Ashley Franklin

“My Derbyshire Journey”

**Ashley illustrates his work as
a writer and photographer.**

**Packed with historical titbits
and fascinating facts**

Refreshments available

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Coming soon to our Open Meetings

5th May: “Teacher, Trader, Lion Tamer and Spy” by Ian Green. The story of an Ilkeston teacher and her family accused of plotting to murder the Prime Minister

2nd June: “Getting crabs, throwing stones and other offences” by Jane Whitaker. Night-watchmen’s notebook in the 1830’s led to this talk of a detailed picture of a different side of life.

7th July: “Film Musicals of the Swinging 60’s” by Mary de Ville. Clips of songs of the 60’s from notable films interspersed with fashions, adverts, news, etc.

4th August: “Robert Bruce Napoleon Walker” by Stephen Flinders. “It’s amazing what turns up when you delve into your family history.”

***** 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.

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1226535837801301> Tel: 07760 966325

Chairman's Corner



Greetings once more from a fresh Orkney.

Many thanks for all the input members gave at last month's AGM. All the points raised were discussed at the committee meeting held the following Tuesday. The Treasurer checked, after the AGM, the usage of the ring-fenced monies in the account and the facility has only been used once in the last 4 years. Also, regarding the point raised concerning those who opt not to receive the Third Age Matters magazine, we will find out what policy other U3A's follow and return to it when we consider the subs. for next year.

With the way that the Bank Holidays have fallen this year we have decided not to hold the Special Interest Groups Fair in its normal format but rather an opportunity will be given for two groups to have a table at each meeting. See Lynne if you would like a table.

The speaker for April's meeting, in the change to the programme, will be Ashley Franklin, so I know that we are going to be treated to some excellent photographs of our home county!

We are grateful to our committee in all they do and time given. It's not too late to offer to help on the committee or in any other way. The length of time any officer can hold a post is limited to ensure that fresh ideas and blood are always available. Two members are coming now towards the end of their period of office, so if you want to offer to join the merry band, we won't say no!

See you all on April 7th to be amazed by Ashley's pictures once more.

Andrew

Interest Groups Round-up

Definitely not Rocket Science

At the February meeting, after discussing the newspaper articles that Andrew brought in, we had a presentation from Martin about light waves (or are they particles)?



Colin brought in this interesting structure that had been constructed last summer in his greenhouse. We thought that these were very tiny bees.



Marian Stopper

History 1 For our March meeting we were all tasked with coming up with news items on the year of our birth. There was no hiding our ages here, and finding that we went back to 1941 for several of us, the Second World War was a dominating subject.

Having said that, it wasn't all doom and gloom. Yes there was Pearl Harbour in 1941 which brought America into the fray, and as I write, I don't think that they have ever been out of it since. We were able to reminisce on the music of the era, Chattanooga Choo Choo by Glen Miller, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, the Andrews Sisters to name but a few. Someone produced a recording on their mobile to which we all crooned along. It all helped to lighten a subject that could have been a little grim. As it happened the subject produced a lot of discussion and laughter along the way and it triggered many memories. There were bad times, but there were good ones alongside, but that, as they say, is history with its many faces.

Altogether it was another very enjoyable meeting from which I think we all took a little away with us. Thank you.

Alwyn Holmes

Flat green May to September 2026 Bowling

Signing in for 2026 season's Bowling sessions (First and Third Monday of the month) will be at the April monthly meeting, for both past players and for any new members wishing to join.

The Bowling sessions this year will again be at The Stanton Institute.

**Best Wishes
Kevin McKay**

Interest Groups Round-up

Craft The ladies in craft had a challenging activity this month—**Macrame**.

The majority had never attempted it before but everyone managed to complete the keyring with some great results.

Thanks to Val's patience and her good instructions we coped.



Barbara Val and Deb

Interest Groups Round-up

Scala Cinema Interest Group The Scala Cinema Interest Group met on Wednesday afternoon 4th March to watch EPIC Elvis Presley in Concert in place of the intended Wuthering Heights film, owing to the Scala cinema having an issue with their supplier. 16 members turned up to see never before seen footage and recordings, featuring Elvis in concert at his Las Vegas residency, during the later stage of his career. For £6 and a decent hot drink it was an enjoyable afternoon. Sadly I have not received any more invitations although I keep asking.



BUT — The Odeon have '**Silvers**' screenings (over 60's). You do need to sign up for alerts, and book it yourself. <https://www.odeon.co.uk/special-screenings/odeon-silvers/>

Derby is the nearest Odeon Cinema and for £2 you can book a ticket (best to book on line) and enjoy a free tea/coffee and biscuit. They are very often new talk-of-the-town releases and timeless classics.

**Alyson Marriott,
Temporary group leader**

Garden Group Our first meeting for 2026 was off to an entertaining start as we had invited the Potty Plotters, aka Elaine and Julia, for their third visit to the group. They kicked off their session with a word search puzzle which was connected to the presentation which followed on. Words included were bra, pants, tights, pegs, shirt, socks, which initially would not bring to mind gardening terms!

However, they are very resourceful and all the above were used for various ways of planting and recycling. They grew strawberries in the bra (not a lace one and large cup required) as the compost has to go between the layers of material and the compost would drop through the lace. Pants/trousers were sewn at the bottom and compost put in and laid in a wheelbarrow (a large amount of compost was required to fill them!) Tights for storing onions and also as ties for sunflowers and tomatoes as they are softer than string. Fish net stockings for flower arranging – put over top of vase. Pegs for labelling plants. Using a chalk pen to write on plant pots is easy to erase for later use. Socks (has to be pure wool) put on corn heads as they start to grow to protect from predators.

Sweet peas and parsnip seeds can be sown by putting a sheet of wet kitchen paper on the bottom of a Tupperware container sprinkling with the seeds then another piece of wet kitchen paper on top and they will start to chit within 10 days.

Elaine has become really enthusiastic about growing loofahs. They are promoting it in the Midlands and want to spread the word in order to compete for the current record which is 5 and a half feet. They are grown the same as cucumbers and ideally need to be grown in a greenhouse as they need the warmth. They are completely sustainable, so are a useful but fun thing to grow. Seeds were handed out to members and we may have to start a Loofah Growing Competition as well as our Potato Competition!

It was a very entertaining meeting and brought a smile to our faces on a grey day. We had a visitor to the meeting (a gentleman) and I am not sure what he thought of the content of the session!

Barbara Bailey

Poets' Corner

The Dawning

by

Janet Reeve

Five fifty-five a.m.
On a still, dusky April morning,
A lone blackbird
Chirping intermittently,
Tentatively greeting
The break of day,
Street lights flickering
On the distant horizon,
Flickering faintly
Beneath a blue-grey sky
Tinged with pastel pink.

Nearby
Roof tops, chimney pots, ghostly
trees,
Silhouetted against the backcloth
Of the dawning sky.
No wind today; no wind,
Just a calming stillness,
No noise; no noise of traffic,
No human voices,
Just the sound, the haunting sound
Of the single blackbird
Greeting the dawning of this new,
God-given day!

