

**MATLOCK AREA**



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



LOTTERY FUNDED

2019 - 2020

# Matlock Area U3A Annual Report 2019 – 2020

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## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Like 2018-19, the last year has been one of change. We are now firmly embedded in electronic communication – this report is now the only paper document that members receive. The Beacon system is now established as the preferred method for co-ordinators to contact their groups and for the storage of both membership records and our accounts. It is also used to distribute the “What’s On” newsletter. 2019 has also seen the launch of our new website which we hope will provide an easy method for members to keep track of MAU3A activities. In 2020 we also intend to involve members in the creation of new content for it.

Membership has now hit over 700 and new groups are being launched regularly. This does not happen without much work behind the scenes by both the co-ordinators and the committee.

- Thanks to Hilary Essen for her great efforts to support existing groups and to nurture new ones.
- Thanks also to Lesley Shawe, Sybil Dunn and Liz Vincent who have seen our Coffee Mornings reach new heights in attendance. Our Christmas Coffee Morning attracted over 100 people, encouraged by entertainment from the Singing and Wind Recorder Groups, not to mention festive decorations and food.
- To Roger Keeling who has quietly and efficiently kept our finances healthy and managed the transition to electronic banking and Beacon accounting, and to Martin Eyre who has boosted our funds by guiding us through Gift Aid complexities.
- To Keith Bailey who has ensured that our groups are equipped with up to date technology and know how to use it.
- To Liz Walker for producing our monthly “What’s On” newsletter and for acting as secretary to the Management Committee.
- To John Entwistle and Steve Happs who have added ideas and insight to our Management meetings, while keeping their own groups going.

- To Penny Ackland and Martin Emery for all their work over the years on the old website and for preparatory work for the new one.
- To Steve Happs, Martin Phillips and especially Mike Frosdick who volunteered for the daunting task of building the new website.
- To Sue Petrie who retires this year after acting as our efficient Membership Secretary for a number of years.
- To Tracy Sims for not only acting as our Publicity Officer, but also for updating our procedures manual and for the production of this annual report.
- To Diane Frosdick for not only making the Beacon system an essential part of our armoury but also for standing in as Chair for the numerous months that it has taken to get the new website up and running.
- Thank you to everyone who is standing down after serving MAU3A as co-ordinator or committee member.
- Last but not least, thank you to all of the co-ordinators – without your energy and enthusiasm, there would be no MAU3A.
- To all of our members, thank you for supporting MAU3A over the last year and please let us know what you like / don't like and what you would like to see happening in MAU3A in the future.

The 2020 AGM will be held at the Imperial Rooms in Matlock on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 2 pm. The AGM will be preceded by light refreshments at 1.30 pm. There are various vacancies on the Committee and unless members volunteer to “do their stint”, the organisation will stagnate and not flourish!! After the formal business, Fran Sandham, an author and Rough Guides editor, will talk about his solo 3000 mile walk across Africa. It is one that you will not want to miss!

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 is National U3A day when groups all over the country will be raising the profile of the organisation and highlighting the opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to stay active and involved.

Remember the motto – **Learn, Laugh, Live!**

Finally, good luck to all of our incoming Committee for 2020-21!

*Dave Puxley* (chair@matlockareau3a.org.uk)

It is with deep sadness that we learned of the recent death of Steve Happs. We would all like to express our thanks for what he has done for MAU3A. He will be missed!

## **Short Walks Group**

We have a membership of over 40 but the number on the walks can range from 4 to 14, depending on weather, terrain and commitments. Walks during the last few months have included Longshaw, Lumsdale, Ashover, Ashford, Alport and Stanton Moor. Most walks start at 10 a.m and are less than 5 miles. We often finish with a drink and a snack, and it has been an excellent way to learn more about our delightful Derbyshire countryside and to make new friends.

*Wendy Green*

## **History Group 5**

The Culture and History of Derbyshire and Yorkshire continues to be our inspiration. The group has had 13 meetings in the calendar year, joining with other groups to hear a talk entitled *The Rise and Fall of the Derby Hebrew Congregation, 1899-1986* in July. All other talks have come from members of the group, as has the organisation of visits locally to Stancliffe Hall, Masson Mill and Smedley Mill.

Transport featured in 19<sup>th</sup> century railways in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire, the High Peak Rail and the Cromford Canal. Other topics included Florence Nightingale, Derby Silk Mill, Derbyshire Well Dressings and the literary and artistic movements associated with Whitby.

The 2020 itinerary will include a range of topics from Lead Mining in the Peak District to the Miners' Strike and the Hillsborough Disaster.

Our thanks to Steven Schmidt who started the group nearly two years ago and has maintained our interest with a vibrant programme.

*Roger Clough*

## Wildflower Group

The Wildflower Group started the year in March along the Cromford Canal where we were greeted by Wild Daffodils and the spectacular large purple flowers of Butterbur. April brought Bluebells in Ambergate and May the pretty Mountain Pansy and Spring Sandwort (locally named Leadwort) at Gang Mine. Our top score for the number of species identified on one walk was 42 counted on the June walk on High Tor and included the very rare Broad Leaved Helleborine. The outdoor walks season was rounded off in October with a Fungi foray at Longshaw estate. In November and December we held indoor meetings developing our flower observation skills through drawing flowers.

We currently have 28 group members who receive notices and the monthly report of flowers seen. Typically, there are 10 people on each walk. We improve our knowledge by using reference material.

*Judith Holt*



## Book Group 1

Book Group 1 must have been one of the earliest groups to form in Matlock U3A. The members take it in turns to host the monthly meetings, and to choose the book to be read that month. This year's books have sparked some lively discussions which invariably branch out into film, television and other books currently being appreciated by the membership. We currently have a couple of vacancies.

*Wendy Green*

## Art Group

The Tuesday Art group has had another enjoyable year of painting and drawing in good company. A highlight was a printing workshop with Nicki Dennett in March; everyone enjoyed it and some have been inspired to develop their skills. Recently we have studied still life with members taking turns to bring beautiful and unusual subjects to celebrate in art.



Our personal styles are as diverse as ever – from bold abstracts to almost photographic reality. Some people spend months gradually building up a subtle oil painting or pastel; others will repeat a drawing or watercolour time after time in search of the effect they seek. While an exquisitely detailed pencil or ink drawing takes one of us weeks another member will be dashing off three joyful artworks in a morning.

We learn a lot from each other and always have fun. New members are welcome.

*Ruth Alistair*

## **Local History Group**

Once again, the group have enjoyed a mixture of indoor and outdoor meetings, with several members having researched a topic and led the meeting. At indoor sessions we heard about: Matlock Bath around the start of the 20th century; the history of the Cromford Canal; old films taken by Harry Gill (a well-known Matlock photographer); the story of Trebor Mints; the history of the Pomegranate Theatre at Chesterfield; St Elphin's- the people and the building; Socks, Stockings and the Development of Knitting; a talk about the Strutts of Belper; a short presentation about the life of Joseph Hardy and then the last meeting was a "mixed bag" which involved all members taking part.

Outside visits were to Spital Cemetery Chesterfield; Creswell Crags; Arkwright's Mill and the Old House Museum at Bakewell.

Once again, we have had a good attendance and I would like to thank all who took part.

*Susan Tomlinson*

## **Art Appreciation 2 Group**

How do we look at art? We need to consider content, form, mood and process. AA2 has certainly done plenty of looking this year, starting off with kinetic and installation artists Theo Jansen and Christo. Sculpture was considered in a talk about Barbara Hepworth and also in the glassware of Dale Chihuly. Bruegel gave us a look at traditional European art and Sorolla, an Impressionist view.

How are, and were, children represented in art? Works by Gainsborough and Epstein gave some answers. Modern interpretations of Australian aboriginal art by Western Desert artisans were very colourful as was the work of Dale Chihuly, showing at Kew Gardens this summer. Textiles were not forgotten as we were shown some fantastic Amish quilts and learnt a little of the history of the Amish of Pennsylvania. We also had a talk by a local, living watercolourist who works 'plein air', painting scenes in and around the Matlock area.

*Penny Whitney*

## International Folk Dancing Group

The international folk dancing group meets every Friday morning in the Community Room at the Arc in Matlock to spend two glorious hours moving to the music of the Balkans. The dances are generally performed in a circle holding hands. Sometimes the steps are intricate, sometimes simple and repetitive. Sometimes slow, sometimes fast. In every case, the experience of moving in time to the music in concert with others is a wonderful thing, and we are grateful for the knowledge and patience of our talented teachers, ably led by Janet King.

The repertoire of dances has grown enormously over the years, with group members attending (and organising) one-day workshops to learn new dances and pass them on. In 2019 our group gave public displays at events in Middleton, Bakewell and Cromford and we hope to repeat this in 2020.

*Rene Bailey*



## **Bowls 2 Group**

April 2019 saw the start of the seventh season for Matlock U3A Bowls Group 2 based at the Matlock Bath Bowls Club. We maintained our membership from last year and everyone enjoyed social but always competitive games in mixed weather. Unfortunately, we had to curtail the season earlier than normal this year due to planned improvements to the green but will be up and running again next year with an improved playing surface.

The new season will start in April 2020 dependent upon the weather conditions, so watch the website for further details. We have vacancies for next season so if you are interested in playing, please get in touch. Do not worry if you have never played before as many of our current members had no experience when they joined and have progressed to playing in the local friendly league. Training, encouragement and equipment can be provided. All you need is suitable clothing, flat shoes and a sense of humour.

*Mike Frosdick*

## **Scrabble 1 Group**

Scrabble 1 meets every Tuesday morning for two hours, which passes very quickly. As well as playing a few games of scrabble, the banter and subjects discussed are also very entertaining, players' concentration must be very good as even a few seven letter words appear!

*David Gadsby*

## **Canasta Group**

We are a friendly welcoming group who enjoy this easy to learn and fascinating game every Tuesday afternoon. Canasta is a complex form of Rummy. It is played worldwide and there are many different versions. We follow the original official canasta rule, known as Classical Canasta. A prior knowledge of the game is not essential, indeed a number of our members learned after joining. We currently have three spaces for would be players.

*Joan Parkin*

## **Bridge Group**

The Bridge Group has had another successful and very enjoyable year. The Group continued to meet at Matlock Football Club every Wednesday morning for three hours of competitive, social bridge. Weekly attendance has consistently been around 50, with up to 14 tables playing duplicate bridge in two sections.

In July, the much coveted 'Frank Hemming Salver' competition was held in July, followed by our annual summer buffet lunch. The salver was presented to the worthy winners, Jackie Jennings and Rhona Oakes, by John Boadle, a founder member.

In May, the Group again held its annual three days away at the delightful Cober Hill Hotel and Conference Centre on the coast, just north of Scarborough, in which some 26 members participated. A three-day visit is again planned for May 2020, this time in Harrogate, with a bumper number of 40 members planning to attend.

*Roger Keeling*

## History Group 2

Our focus at the moment is the 18<sup>th</sup> century but we stray outside that if the fancy takes. Our interests are wide ranging and the topics have included: 18<sup>th</sup> Century London reflected in William Hogarth's work, early North American Conflicts: Setting the Stage for 'Manifest Destiny', the life and career of Robert Walpole, a visit to Smedley's Mill at Lea, a 'Dead Bird' (a Joseph Wright painting of an experiment on a bird in an air pump 1768). We also joined other groups for a presentation by Dr David Beeston – The Rise and Fall of the Derby Hebrew Congregation, 1899-1986.

Other topics have included: Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, the East India Company and the beginning of the subjugation of India and People on the Move – the Great Georgian Dislocation.

*Helen Boocock*



## The Gardening Group

The garden group has continued to be popular, with over 60 members.

2019 has seen a variety of visits and events. Visits have included The Old Vicarage at Wirksworth for the snowdrops, a coach trip to Wentworth Castle, and a guided tour of the gardens at St Elphins. We ended the year with a Christmas social and quiz. Possibly our favourite garden this year was Park Hall at Walton, especially as we were one of the last visiting groups to this amazing garden.

We visit local gardens within about a 40- mile radius, everything from stately homes to small NGS gardens and usually arrange shared transport if you are not a driver. We also have occasional talks on gardening issues. You do not have to be a gardener to join us. No need to know botanical names to enjoy gardens!

*Liz Walker*



## History 3 Group

During the year we have continued our research into the history of the nineteenth century. This has ranged from global issues such as Australasia and the development of steamships to the study of individuals such as Cecil Rhodes, Sir William Armstrong, Ada Lovelace and Sir Alfred Lord Tennyson. Local industries were examined through Coal and the Fitzwilliams of Wentworth Woodhouse as well as the Coventry Silk Industry. Social history was considered through Victorian religion, The Tolpuddle Martyrs, 1848 - The Year of Revolution together with Family, Sex and Marriage.

This year's field trip was to Kelham Island and Abbeydale Industrial Museums where members discovered the amazing technological innovations of the industrial revolution, counter-balanced by the resulting harsh working conditions endured by our ancestors.

The nineteenth century offers well-resourced research opportunities and as yet shows no sign of failing to deliver further fascinating topics to explore and discuss.

*John Entwistle*



## Cars and Motoring Group

The Cars and Motoring group enjoyed another year of varied events in 2019, together with a steady rise in membership. Events in 2019 included scenic runs, outings to competitions, vehicle preparation workshops, motor shows, visits to a car factory, car museums, local car shows, classic vehicle auctions and sporting events. For a full description of events 2019 please visit our page on the MAU3A website.



For 2020 we intend to spread our wings further afield, as we have visited most, if not all, of the places of interest in the near vicinity. If you know otherwise, please forward your suggestions!

New members always welcome – you don't have to own a classic car (or even a car at all come to that), you just need to be interested in the subject matter!

*Hartley Jenkinson*

## Family History Group

Family History group members have been very active this year doing presentations on a range of topics from their families' past. This included, surnames, schools, a family Draper & Furrier business, copyright issues, military ancestors and heraldry.

Lisa from the local studies library gave us an interactive demonstration of how to use old newspapers on the internet to assist our research. We have also brought in our laptops etc and shared expertise on how best to use them for our own Family History research and particularly presentations.

Members feel that the group has helped them enjoy “the fascinating background bits to their ancestors' lives”

*Angie Corby*

## **Boules Groups - Un, Deux, Trois and d'Hiver**

Our sixth year of Boule in MAU3A and all four groups are thriving. Last summer, we were enjoyed prolonged heat and sunshine, so it was a little disappointing to return to more usual temperatures in 2019, but we Derbyshire folk are resilient and we really enjoyed playing in all types of weather!

Each group plays on a weekly basis with up to twelve players, forming teams of two or three, who play against each other. Monday and Friday groups, both of which have space for additional players, meet in the morning and then enjoy lunch or a drink together and put the world to rights. On Wednesday we play in the afternoon, followed by a drink - in the winter a mug of Hot Chocolate is very well received!

Boules is a fun and sociable game, played by all levels of ability. Should you want more information please visit our page on the MAU3A website.

*Martin Emery*

## **History Group 1**

We continued with the period 1066 – 1485, beginning the year with a world view.

This period offers a huge range of interest from rulers, politics, women who took part in the Crusades, families, letters reflecting the period, the romance of the Silk Roads and those who chose to separate themselves from the world by becoming recluses. We found that there are many parallels with the current situation in this country and abroad.

As always, our 5 minute entrees at the start of each session entertained and informed in equal measure.

For our visit, we toured the National Memorial Arboretum and enjoyed an excellent lunch. Once again, our final meeting of the year was at The Family Tree at Whatstandwell, culminating in a delicious buffet.

*Janet Pidgeon*

## Birding Group

Another successful year for the birding group, run jointly with Bakewell U3A. We enjoyed outings across the county and into Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire. Our annual trip away was to the Wash, timed to coincide with the arrival of the migrating geese and waders who had spent their summer



on breeding grounds further north around the arctic circle. This area provides rich pickings for the breeding birds who come further south as the cold winter approaches.

The trip included visits to two reserves at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore. We arrived early in the morning at Freiston Shore, just as the sun was rising and the tide reaching its highest point. This is the time when hundreds of wading birds come off the marshes and into the lagoons, where they settle until the tide retreats, uncovering the salty mud they find food in. The spectacle was amazing with over 75 species seen.

*Jane Burgess*

## Film Group

The Film Group continues to thrive and flourish, still meeting in the Duke of Wellington pub where we enjoy hearing members' views and opinions of current films. We are open to all film genres available at our local cinemas, including live screenings and good television dramas.

Some of us attended an excellent short WEA film course on British Films and Directors at the Whitworth Centre and we rounded off the year with a lunch at our pub.

We look forward to another year of cinema going, more film courses and stimulating discussion.

*Sarah Puxley*

## **German Group**

This friendly group meets for conversation in German every Monday except the first in the month at 11 am in the Red Lion at Matlock Green. Everybody contributes to the varied programme. Sometimes a little preparation by individuals is required, but it is all quite simple and aims to be fun and provide a chance for practice and improvement.

*Ingrid Pasteur*

## **Art Appreciation 1 Group**

This year we have looked at work from the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Watts Gallery near Guildford, a photographic exhibition seen in Luxemburg, a major Art Gallery in Quebec and a glass exhibition at Kew Gardens.

We have also revisited some well-known paintings with the work of Turner and the Impressionists. The paintings of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, plus images from the huge Pierre Bonnard exhibition at Tate Modern. The life and work of Henry Moore and the sculptor Jacometti were discussed and we were also introduced to the Scottish artist Joan Eardley.

We examined aspects of drawing from early times to the present day. This gave us the opportunity to consider the value and importance of drawing to the history of art. Future topics include the paintings of Paul Nash and John Singer Sargent. Throughout the year members of this group have continued to give their enthusiastic support.

*Anne Oldfield*

## **Wednesday Painting Group**

We have been in a state of flux over the autumn. We said goodbye to our founder and coordinator, Liz Chisnall, and two other members who have moved nearer their families. We have welcomed two new members.

This year we had outside artists demonstrating and used the U3A webcam equipment. It proved very successful. We enjoyed seeing the artists develop their work displaying their techniques in pastel and watercolour respectively. We have invested in a small printing press and have had a couple of interesting workshops led by a member. It is certainly a process that needs practice. Members are more familiar working with the Encaustic wax equipment and produce very free flowing work. In May members visited the lovely Lea Rhododendron Gardens for an ‘en plein air’ session. It was a new experience for many of the group.

*Gill Oldroyd*

## **Lunch Club Group**

Beginning in April 2019 we have grown in numbers, erudition and friendship. Meeting at selected – “prior tested” places provides a range of ambience, menus, convenience and cost. Often with a pre-lunch drink, we enjoy local eateries such as: - Biggin Hall, Piedaniels French Restaurant, Willersley Hall, Pesto at the Peacock and the Jug and Glass, Lea. Future plans include Alison House at Cromford, The Orangery at St Elphins, the famous Red Lion at Stone Edge and The Greyhound at Cromford.

We have a Co-ordinator; but our sustained enjoyment is created by our small team of dedicated “Hosts” who lead at their selected venue, with great success. Our membership is currently full, but we have only a short waiting list. If there is the opportunity, we would be absolutely delighted to welcome new members.

*John Anderson*

## Current Affairs 2 Group

The Current Affairs 2 Group continued to meet on the last Wednesday of each month throughout the year, with a three-month summer break. The Group meets at members' homes, with around ten members attending each meeting.

Needless to say, with the events of the past year, 'hot' topics have not been hard to find. With the varying experiences and views of its members, the discussions have always been lively, wide-ranging and, often, thought provoking. The New Year certainly promises to present the Group with no shortness of discussion material!

*Roger Keeling*

## Wind Recorder Group

The Wind Recorder Group passed its second anniversary in September 2019. We have eleven active members and meet fortnightly to play pieces in a variety of musical styles with 3 or 4 parts. We are a non-performance group but did steel ourselves to play at the U3A December 2019 coffee morning! New members are welcome to join us.

*Karen Hale*



## MATLOCK AREA U3A GROUPS

Details of all the current Matlock Area U3A Groups can be found at:

**<https://matlockareau3a.org.uk/groups-list>**

**Website: <https://matlockareau3a.org.uk>**

**Registered Charity Number 1161704**

## TRUSTEES OF THE MATLOCK AREA U3A AND MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2019-2020

<b>Name</b>	<b>Home Location</b>	<b>Committee Role</b>	<b>Elected Until</b>
Sue Petrie	Ashover	Membership Secretariat	2020
Roger Keeling	Wirksworth	Treasurer	2021
Dave Puxley	Matlock	Chair	2021
Liz Walker	Darley Dale	Newsletter Editor/Meeting Minutes	2021
Stephen Happs	Matlock	Ordinary Member	2022
John Entwistle	Matlock	Ordinary Member	2022
Tracy Sims	Tansley	Publicity Officer	2020
Lesley Shawe	Matlock Bath	Coffee Morning Organiser	2021
Liz Vincent	Ashover	Coffee Morning Organiser	2021
Sybil Dunn	Hackney	Ordinary Member	2021
Martin Eyre	Matlock	Gift Aid (co-opted)	
Diane Frosdick	Matlock Bath	Beacon Administrator (co-opted)	
Penny Ackland	Matlock Bath	Webmaster	2019
Hilary Essen	Matlock	Groups Liaison Officer	2021