



Life lessons & words of wisdom

Dr Eric Midwinter. is one of the three founders of the u3a in the UK. His topline philosophy on life is **Be Positive**.

Every morning repeat: "I am an active citizen, not a passive social casualty." We are privileged to be the first-ever generation of a society to see most people survive a natural life span; so grasp the opportunities these valuable years bring.

"Make sure that in the long letter of life, you end with a glorious paragraph rather than a skimpy postscript.

Get involved

"The u3a is a thriving, evolving organisation, but being part of it – as implied in the small print when members join – obliges everyone to contribute to the working of the organisation and to help recruit new members. This is a mutual proactive cooperative not a dated Darby & Joan club, where members amble along being looked after by others!"

Set Goals

"Have purposes and targets. Things that you aim to do, whether travelling, writing your memoirs or choosing a new learning theme. Give yourself commissions to complete by a certain date. I have found that having deadlines and targets has kept me alive. Finally: never look up medical symptoms on the internet – that's lethal."

Born into a working class family in Sale, near Manchester, in the 1930s, Eric proceeded, via scholarships to grammar school and Cambridge University. He became a successful social historian, teacher, educationalist, social policy analyst, consumer champion, campaigner for older people, lecturer and prolific author. In more than 60 books, Eric Midwinter has written extensively on many subjects, including sport (especially cricket) and the world of comedy and entertainers. A man of great erudition and wit, as well as being a passionate egalitarian. Now in his 90th decade, he is an example to us all!

If you know anyone that would benefit by joining our thriving u3a, please contact our membership secretary Kathryn Cope. We have a great deal to offer. Remember our motto: Live Learn Laugh.

Irene Brooks



Dr Eric Midwinter

Mountain rescue insight

At our June meeting Paul Barlow from Derby Mountain Rescue Team gave us a real insight into just how well trained and dedicated mountain rescue volunteers are. Basic training takes 18 months to two years. Once the initial assessment is passed all volunteers are reassessed every three years. All are qualified in casualty care but some go on to be remote medics allowing them to administer painkillers such as morphine. There are specialist dog handlers and drone operators and experts in water rescues.

Our rambles took home two key messages. If there's an incident out on the hills dial 999 and ask for the police then mountain rescue, not an ambulance and give a grid reference if you can. What3words is OK but be sure to spell out the words to avoid any confusion.



Our July speaker

Friday 5 July 2024 at Forest Town Arena 10.00 for 10.30 start

Ann Featherstone is our July speaker and her topic is: 'Mashed potato sandwiches'.

Ann is a retired university lecturer and teacher as well as a writer of non-fiction books and historical novels.

Her talk is based on Mrs Rose Buckner who wrote a weekly column for mothers in the 'Sunday People' for ten years from 1947, sharing incidents in her daily life as a not-so-ordinary British housewife.

NT group at East Riddlesden

We drove up to Yorkshire through heavy rain but as we arrived at the Hall the sun shone. The hall was the centre of a vast agricultural estate. It is a perfect little gem of 17th century living, with oak panelling and decorative ceiling plaster work still evident.

Above the front and back entrances to the house are two striking rose windows installed by wealthy Yorkshire industrialist, James Murgatroyd. We were informed of the more quirky facts of 17th century living:

- ◆ The knobs on the sides of the cradle held criss-crossed string to prevent a cat lying on the baby. This was the origin of the game cat's cradle.
- ◆ There were no keys to lock the property; just huge rectangles of oak wood very effectively bolting the doors.
- ◆ There was a massive grain chest which could be taken apart and moved elsewhere – a forerunner of flat pack furniture!

A delightful cottage garden, packed with plants to give a colourful display, surrounded this compact site.

After lunch we travelled to Hardcastle Crag. A steep wooded valley criss-crossed with many footpaths leading to Gibson Mill. Some of the group walked more adventurous routes but most walked along the 1 mile flat estate path following the river to the mill for tea and ice creams! It was an idyllic end to a fabulous day out, complete with glorious sunshine.

This trip runs again on Monday 9 September, £18-50. There are currently six places left on the minibus.

National Trust Group
Leader: **Ann Stanford.**
Contact Ann on: 01623 641864 Email:
annstanford1@sky.com



Buddies needed to welcome new members

When new and prospective members first arrive at the Arena for our General Meetings it can be very daunting to see the room so busy. Your committee is therefore seeking to introduce a Buddy scheme. We need volunteers to greet the new members/visitors who may come through our doors. Please volunteer to welcome them, show them our Groups board, have a general chat to explain what our u3a is about and, most importantly, where they can get a cup of tea!

If you feel that you can help by becoming a greeter please give your name to Sue Robinson or Halina Gaskell. so they can make a rota for the year. Many thanks for your support.

Kathryn Cope

Making music

The music group's July meeting will be on the 3rd Friday of the month – that's 19 July from 12 midday till 2pm. This is a chance for those who can't get to the usual 2nd Friday to check out the music group.

The music group's Irene Brooks explains: "We will be doing some line dancing to promote a new Forest Town u3a group. A sandwich & cake, tea or coffee will be provided. "Please sign up at the July general meeting so we know how much food to make."

Come and listen to your favourite music from the 50s, 60s, and 70s.



Music Group Leaders: **Win Wall & Irene Brooks**
Usually meet on 2nd Fridays but 3rd in July

Keep on rambling whatever the weather

Our first walk in 'flaming June' was noted for a cold blustery northerly wind which had us donning extra layers of clothing and then stripping them off in more sheltered spots.

Setting out from the plague village of Eyam, we passed a village boundary stone on the grassy descent into Stoney Middleton. Merchants would leave food on these stones for the villagers of Eyam during their self-imposed quarantine. Villagers paid by leaving money in deep holes carved into the stones which were filled with vinegar to disinfect the coins.

Passing through Stoney Middleton we entered Coombs Dale, haunt of Black Harry, an 18th century highwayman.

A steep climb out brought us onto Longstone Edge and then Longstone Moor, with magnificent views towards Monsal Dale and beyond. Once off the moor, we walked through pasture land to Foolow, clambering over so many wall stiles, we lost count.

Happily, the path from Foolow back to Eyam had more gates than stiles. We rounded off the walk with coffee and cakes at the Eyam Hall café.

There was an enforced change to our programmed second walk in June to Dale Abbey. A recce of the walk revealed some sections were completely overgrown and impassable. Instead, we set out on a pleasant summer's day from Woodhouse Eaves in Leicestershire on a route taking in Bradgate Park with its herd of fallow deer.

Unusually, the ruins of Bradgate House were open to the public. An enthusiastic volunteer explained this Tudor house was the birthplace of Lady Jane Grey, later Queen, ruling for a mere 9 days before being overthrown by Mary I.

Lunch was taken at Old John Tower in the park; a ruined folly on a hill standing at 696 feet high, giving great views over Leicester and the surrounding countryside.

After the walk, we enjoyed drinks and cake at the Quorn



heritage railway station, laid out to appear as it would have been in the 1940s, as a typical rural LNER station.

Our next rambles: 3 July: Upper Goyt Valley and Buxton (8 miles). 17 July: Minibus trip to Hunstanton including circular walk from there (9 miles). New members welcome.



Ramblers Group Leader: **Andrew Riby**.
Rambles from 7 miles up to 9 miles. Meet 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. Contact Andrew on: 01623 656958 Mobile: 07833 543705 Email: ribya@imcgroup.co.uk

Gardening notebooks

This month's theme was 'gardening notebooks': We had a busy and enjoyable time constructing two books each out of decorated card, plain paper and thread; all under Angelina's instructions (and with materials provided by her). A pretty display was made of the finished articles, some of which included bookmarks made from the trimmings.



Gardening Craft Group Leader:
Angelina Taylor Meet 2nd Tuesdays

Tea and biscuits helped us along and ideas were discussed for future sessions, eg, a visit to a garden centre.

Book club

There will be no Book Club meeting in August.

The meeting in September will be on Monday 2nd at 10.30am in Forest Town Library.

Book Group Leader:
Ann Stanford
Meet 1st Mondays

Remembering D Day and beyond

In June we looked at records from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), and what they can tell us about our ancestors who fought and died for their country in the two World Wars.

Pauline led the session and concentrated on the CWGC graves that are situated in St Alban's churchyard. Most of these can be found in three rows and all have the standard CWGC headstones. These are maintained by a contractor on behalf of the CWGC. However, there are also a few scattered throughout the churchyard with more traditional layouts, kerbstones, urns, etc. This would have been at the family's request and their maintenance is the responsibility of the families and not the CWGC.

One of these, situated in the extension churchyard, is the grave of Kenneth Oates. On the kerbstone is the inscription *'In Remembrance of our Dear Son, F/O Kenneth Oates, killed on active service, Aug. 16th, 1944, aged 23 years'*. More has been discovered about Kenneth and his story is worth the telling.

Flying Officer Kenneth Oates, Service Number 152366, was a navigator with 518 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, Coastal Command, during World War II. From 1943, 518 Squadron was based at Tiree, Argyll in the Inner Hebrides. The Squadron's role, using Halifax bombers, was to gather meteorological information over the Northwest Approaches and out into the Atlantic. There were many fatal accidents due to the appalling weather conditions and it is known that parachutes were not issued to crews as these were considered to be a waste of money.



518 Squadron was to play a vital part in the timing and strategy for the allied invasion of Europe, known as Operation Overlord, or the D Day Landings.

The weather forecast for the planned invasion was dire with two large depressions approaching and, without dominance in the air to provide ground cover, the whole operation was at risk. There was a chance that a small window of opportunity might be possible between the two weather fronts and therefore aircraft from Tiree were deployed to fly sorties on 5 June 1944 to obtain accurate meteorological readings on which the whole operation would depend. Due to their findings Operation Overlord was able to go ahead on 6 June 1944.

It is not known if F/O Kenneth Oates was actively involved in this particular sortie, however he would have been flying in the weeks coming up to the invasion, gathering vital meteorological information to enable defence of our air space.

Two months later, on 16 August 1944, Kenneth and his crew took off, alongside another Halifax. The weather was overcast and shortly after take off both entered low cloud. Tragically, about 17 minutes later the two were involved in a head on collision and burst into flames around 300 feet above the airfield. Sixteen men died that day and there were no survivors from either aircraft.

Most of the casualties from 518 Squadron are buried on Tiree, however a small number like F/O Kenneth Oates were brought home to be buried by their families.

The records available on the CWGC website are free to view and information they contain can add interest to your family tree. More information about 518 Squadron and the D Day Landings is also available online.

We are taking a break this month but will be meeting again in August.

Report by **Jenny Wright**

Trace Your Family Tree Group Leaders:
Andrew & Julie Rowbottom Meet 3rd Tuesdays

Snap & Chat transported!

Hi to you all. For our June meeting the theme was transport. We had a display of 11 photos and from them we selected four winners. As you can see in the picture, right, there was a variety of different photos taken.

Also at our meeting, Arthur, who is our professional photographer, brought his photography equipment to show us how he is going to set things up so that he can take photos at the Summer Ball. We still have not set a date to go out 'on location' but hopefully, we will be able to do that soon now the weather has improved! Next month our theme is holidays. That's it for now.

Report by: **Steve Edis** Photography Group Leader:
Alan Taylor Meet 2nd Tuesdays



Potters 2024

Denise Whitsed reports that another fabulous time was had at the Potters Holiday Resort overlooking the picturesque Norfolk coast.

Despite the weather being sometimes unpredictable, we managed a morning down at the beach. Many members tried new activities including archery and segways.

Our members won an amazing £3,743 in the bingo sessions with three members winning over £1000 each!

As ever the five star West End quality entertainment proved popular. This holiday is always a winner with all meals and drinks included. The u3a Christmas trip will be 18 November with twin and double rooms available. Contact Denise on 07791 941502 for details.



Summer Ball

It's £15 each for the u3a summer ball and there are still a few places available.

The evening will include, the fabulous Ravenshead Swing Band, a complimentary Pimm's and a buffet. There is a Black & White theme for those who want to dress to impress. There will also be professional 8"x6" photographs available at £3 each as a memento of a great night out. Book at July meeting or ring Kathryn on 07711 128897.

Christmas at the Hostess



December 19 at 12 midday is the date for the Forest Town & District u3a Christmas lunch at The Hostess. Tickets are £20 and will be on sale from the July meeting. Payment to be made in full at time of booking. Please note that if you are not able to attend, refunds will only be available at the discretion of the Hostess after the event.

National Trust upcoming visits

Wentworth Castle Gardens THURSDAY 4 JULY - Bus will leave at 09.30 from Forest Town Arena

Upton House and Canons Ashby THURSDAY 19th SEPTEMBER - 32 seats on a Millennium coach. £20 payable from July main meeting. Upton House was the country retreat of Lord and Lady Bearsted from 1927. It houses a world renowned art collection and has stunning terraced gardens. Canons Ashby is a Tudor Manor House built by the Dryden family using the remains of a medieval priory.

Ann Stanford

At a Glance Diary – Meetings, Events & Trips

July	July	July
NATIONAL TRUST WENTWORTH CASTLE GARDENS Thursday 4 July Price £17	GENERAL MEETING Friday 5 July 10.30, Forest Town Arena Ann Featherstone <i>Mashed potato sandwiches</i>	TRENT RIVER CRUISE Wednesday 10 July Price £37
July	August	September
SUMMER BALL Saturday 27 July Forest Town Arena Price £15	GENERAL MEETING Friday 2 August 10.30 Forest Town Arena Elaine Perkins <i>The life of a Medieval woman</i>	PICNIC & GAMES Friday 16 August 11.30 Rufford Country Park
September	September	September
GENERAL MEETING Friday 6 September 10.30 Forest Town Arena <i>Medical Detection Dogs</i>	NATIONAL TRUST EAST RIDDLES DEN HALL AND HARDCASTLE CRAGS Monday 9 September Price £18.50	NATIONAL TRUST UPTON HOUSE AND CANNONS ASHBY Thursday 19 September Price £20

Which interest groups will you join?

Just pick up the phone or turn up on the day

Group	When	Where	Time	Leader
Book Club	1st Mondays	Forest Town Library	10.30-12.00	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Breakfast Club	Last Tuesdays	various	10.00	Kevin Cope 07902 579299
Bus Pass Group	Various	Various	As agreed	Christine Cawthorne 01623 658171
Card Craft	4th Mondays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Sue Buchanan 07957 656514
Computers & IT	Any time	Member's home	By arrangement	Robert Hunt 07588 047885
Country Dancing	2nd Tuesdays	Flint Avenue Centre	14.00-16.00	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Current Affairs	2nd Wednesdays	Flint Ave Centre	10.00-12.00	Michael King 01623 470629
Days Out & Holidays	Advertised at general meetings 1st Fridays	Forest Town Arena	10.30 start	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
Evening Dinner Out	4th Thursdays	Various	18.30	Marilyn Redfern 01623 845731
Garden & Crafts	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
Litter Pick	4th Tuesdays	Meet at Forest Town Arena	10.00	Mike Lyall 07752 878619
Luncheon club	Various	Various	Lunchtime	Jan Kerr and Olive Moore
Music 50s, 60s & 70s	2nd Fridays	Forest Town Arena	14.00-16.00	Win Wall & Irene Brooks 07765 970751
National Trust	Various	Meet at Forest Town Arena	Various	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Painting & Drawing	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00-16.00	Mike Lyall 07752 878619
Photos Snap & Chat	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00-16.00	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
Rambling 7-9 miles	1st & 3rd Wednesdays	Various	Various	Andy Riby 07833 543705
Table Tennis	1st Tuesdays	Oak Tree Centre	10.30-12.30	Marilyn Redfern 01623 845731
Tabletop Games	4th Mondays	Flint Avenue	14.00-16.00	Jane Vernon 07947 958850
Trace Your Family Tree	3rd Tuesdays	Flint Avenue Centre	14.00-16.00	Andrew & Julie Rowbottom 01623 636223

All members are invited to General Meetings – first Friday in the month at Forest Town Arena 10.00 for 10.30 start.

Your Committee contacts

Forest Town & District u3a relies on the hard work of its Executive Committee. Everyone gives their time freely. All members can be contacted via the website at <https://forest-town.u3asite.uk/contact/>

Current members of the Committee are:

Irene Brooks (Chair), Mike Lyall (Vice-Chair), Sue Robinson (Treasurer), Jenny Vernalls (Assistant Treasurer) Janis Bye & Kay Toy (joint Business Secretaries), Kathryn Cope (Membership Secretary), Halina Gaskell (Assistant Membership Secretary & joint Speaker Seeker), Marilyn Redfern (Groups' Coordinator), Sue Buchanan (Assistant Groups' Coordinator & joint Speaker Seeker) and Winston Wall. **Winston Wall** is the Welfare Officer. If you have any concerns then please call him on 01623 640037. Bob Hunt is the Website Editor, email: webftu3a@gmail.com

Next issue is Sept

Please send articles or ideas for the next issue to Helen Riby by email: ftu3anews@gmail.com or by post to: 5 Fal Paddock, Mansfield Woodhouse NG19 9RW **by midnight on Sunday 25 August 2024.**

For latest news visit: <https://forest-town.u3asite.uk/>
Forest Town & District u3a is a Registered Charity Number 1186417