



THE MAGAZINE

Autumn Issue

2024



Near Almirante Brown research base, Antarctica
Photograph by Dean Nixon



Market Drayton

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Market Drayton u3a Committee Members 2024-2025

Executive Committee

CHAIRPERSON	Alan Cartwright
SECRETARY	Phillip Glover
HONOURARY TREASURER	Andy Shearer
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Judy Cowdale
PROGRAMME SECRETARY	Kevin Read-Jones
'THE MAGAZINE' EDITORS	John & Viv McVittie
WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR / NETWORK COORDINATOR	Jill Glover
COMMITTEE	Peter Ingham
COMMITTEE	Sue Walker
COMMITTEE	Jacqui Wright

HELP US HELP OUR u3a

Volunteering to start a new group does not have to be daunting. You can make a big difference at your u3a.

You can bring a lot to your u3a in the form of your energy, time, and ideas.

How you can help?

- Start a new group for your interests.
- It doesnt have to be forever; run a groups for a few weeks only.
- Do it with friends to start up.
- Volunteer to become a Hostess or odd job person.
- Help us at events or special meetings.
- Attend the monthly meetings.
- Help serve tea and coffee after the monthly meetings.

Write with PosterMaker.com

OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

I hope you've had a good summer and are keeping well.

Market Drayton u3a made slow progress last year, with our total membership increasing slightly despite a number of people leaving us. There were 207 members at the end of the year compared to 204 the year before. We had excellent speakers at almost all our monthly Festival Drayton Centre meetings and our special interest groups continued to thrive as far as known with just a few exceptions mentioned in previous newsletters. There had also been an improvement in our finances after the difficult steps we'd had to take in relation to annual subscriptions and national and in-house magazines twelve months earlier. Allowing for all that it looked as though I would be signing off at a fairly good point given that Chairs are only permitted to serve for three years under our constitution and 2023-24 had been my third year.

There had been one disappointment though in the lack of responses to our appeals for members to join the Committee. In addition to the regular need for new ideas and fresh input there was a great deal of concern behind the appeals made last year in that the existing Secretary, Treasurer and Chair would all be stepping down from those positions in September. That was either because of the rule in our constitution regarding maximum length of service already referred to, or family circumstances. In the absence of anyone being prepared to offer their help and support it was difficult to see how we would go on in the future. Hopefully the proceedings at the AGM may have helped to clarify a way forward but, if not, there have to be questions about the viability and continuation of the Group.

Returning to the subject of our special interest groups, please note that Trish Dawson has become the new convenor of our Gardening group taking over from Beryl Edwards. Trish can be contacted on 07977 561754 or via p.dawson1946@gmail.com.

Sadly, as many of you will know, Helen Smith passed away a few months ago. Our condolences go to her husband David as well as all their family and friends.

In concluding I would like to thank everyone on the Committee together with the Group's convenors and other volunteers for all their hard work and commitment.

All the best for the future,

Alan Cartwright

Chair of Market Drayton u3a

STRAIGHT FROM THE CENTRE

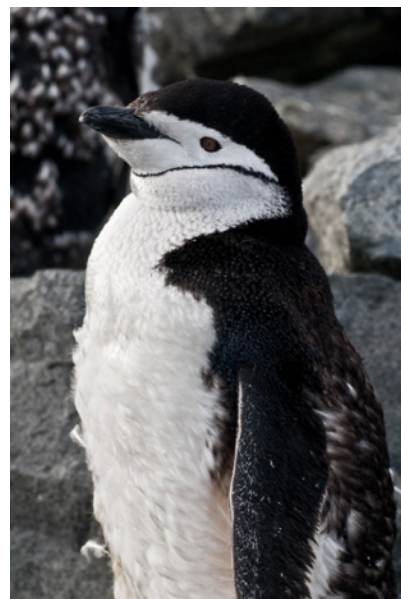
We hope that those of you who have attended the monthly meetings at the Festival Drayton Centre over the last few months have enjoyed our speakers. Many thanks to Kevin Read-Jones (the current programme secretary) for providing us with such a varied and entertaining line up. Here are some of the highlights:

Antarctica - Trip of Lifetime - 18th April

Dean Nixon is an amateur photographer who enchanted us at our April meeting with the story and photographs of his trip to Antarctica. He described Antarctica (twice the size of Australia) as a dark, beautiful, awesome, quiet and lonesome continent. It is the coldest, windiest and driest continent on earth and home to about 1500 research scientists from many nations.

Although it is possible to visit the Antarctic peninsula on large cruise liners (2000 plus passengers), these ships cannot approach close enough to land (or icebergs!) for tourists to get a close up view of the fascinating landscape and its inhabitants. Smaller ships, catering for as few as 30 to maybe 300 guests can approach close to shore and are equipped with zodiacs and even kayaks that are used to manoeuvre through the ice floes and land on shore.

Dean chose to use the small-ship approach and flew from London to Buenos Aires in Argentina. As he was a single traveller he was paired up with a fellow traveller for accommodation and after a couple of days experiencing Argentinian steaks and tangoes they flew to Ushuaia, the southernmost town on earth (80,000 inhabitants) from where they boarded their ship. MV Grigoriy Mikheev, an ex Russian ice-breaker and research ship, was 210ft long and had a Russian crew of 25, including guides and an emergency doctor, and 39 tourists of whom about half were British. The accommodation was basic but the food was very good and the ship was well equipped for diving and photography expeditions. A three day journey across the treacherous Drakes Passage (where the Pacific and Atlantic oceans meet) led them to the Antarctic peninsula where they were captivated by the penguins, seals and whales, not to mention the icebergs.



Highlights were:

Half-Moon Island, where there were thousands of very noisy Adele penguins;

Deception Island, where a live volcano underwater results in relatively warm waters allowing scuba divers to get up close to antarctic marine life;

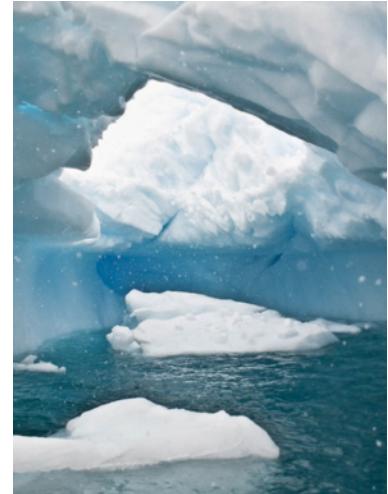
Port Lockroy, an ex-whaling station and now a research station which houses a post office dealing with approximately 80,000 pieces of mail a year;

Lemaire Channel, an 8 mile long passage between the Antarctic mainland and an island which is only 600 metres wide at its narrowest point and is spectacularly filled with ice-floes.

And Pleneau Bay, known as the iceberg graveyard, with incredible shapes in the ice carved by the sea and the wind. So many shades of blue.

All in all, a fascinating talk about a wonderful, mysterious continent.

Reported by John McVittie
Photographs by Dean Nixon



Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies - 16th May

Now retired from a long career in the immigration service, **Martin Lloyd** came to enlighten us with three tales in which the possession of a passport or the declared nationality of an individual had political or legal consequences.

1858 Count Felice Orsini was an Italian revolutionary who believed that the presence of a French garrison around Rome was standing in the way of his ambition for a unified Italy. He became convinced that if the French emperor Napoleon III were removed from office, political unrest in France would make it easier to arrange an uprising in Italy. In 1856/57 he built up a group with the aim of assassinating Napoleon III.

In order to visit France Orsini needed a passport, but he was known to the French authorities who would not grant him access. He had made visits to Britain and attempted to get a British passport but at that time passports were only issued to individuals who personally knew the Foreign Secretary (for a sum of £2 7s 6d). He recruited to his group an English barrister called Allsop who gave Orson his own passport and also helped him arrange the manufacture of some hand-held bombs. Using Allsop's passport, Orsini entered France.

On 14th January 1858, Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie were attending the opera. Large crowds had gathered to greet them as they arrived in a state carriage. Orsini and two accomplices threw three bombs at the carriage with disastrous effect. Eight people and a horse were killed and up to 150 people were wounded. The carriage was armoured-plated and although it was damaged, the Emperor and Empress were unharmed. They continued with their visit to the opera. Orsini and his accomplices were quickly rounded up, tried and in March 1858 Orsini was executed.

There was a rapid deterioration in political relations between Britain and France. France implicated Britain in the affair because Orsini had used a British passport and the bombs had been manufactured in Britain. They introduced stricter passport controls and deported many political opponents of the Emperor to Algeria. They requested that the British Government restrict the right to political asylum, a request that was ignored by Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister. This led to the government's censure in the

House of Commons and the downfall of the Whig government. For some time there was increased fear amongst the British public of invasion by France.

1914 At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 many tourists trapped in Germany wanted to escape. They hadn't needed a passport to enter Germany but they needed an exit permit/passport to get out. One English tourist had his exit permit stolen by a German spy who came to England and spied on naval dockyards. After his arrest a consequence of this was that British passports had to include a photograph of the holder.

1945 Three weeks after the German surrender at the end of the Second World War, British soldiers interrogated a dishevelled looking individual near the Danish border. They recognised him by his voice - he was William Joyce (nickname Lord Haw-Haw) who had been the principal news reader and propagandist in the English language for German radio. He was arrested and in September tried for high treason at the Old Bailey.

William Joyce had been born in New York and when he was three the family moved to Ireland. About fifteen years later the family moved to England and Joyce attended school in Wimbledon and Birkbeck College, London. He became politically active, joining the British Union of Fascists and becoming its deputy leader. At some stage during this time he obtained a British passport although he had not taken on British nationality. He fled to Germany a month before the outbreak of the Second World War and was recruited as a newsreader by German radio's English Service. In July 1940 he became a naturalised German citizen. During the trial it was argued that Joyce had never been a British subject and that therefore he could not be prosecuted for betraying a country that was not his own. The Attorney General counter-argued that his possession of a British passport, even though it was obtained by fraud, entitled him British diplomatic protection in Germany and that he therefore owed allegiance to the King when he began working for the Germans. He was convicted and sentenced to death.

AJP Taylor, the British historian, later wrote: "Technically, Joyce was hanged for making a false statement when applying for a passport, the usual penalty for which is a small fine."

Reported by John McVittie

Shrewsbury Ghosts and Spirits - 20th June 2024



The Old Post Office

With its long and somewhat dark history and wealth of old buildings Shrewsbury is considered one of the most haunted parts of the United Kingdom. Amongst the town's ghosts and spirits are countless murder and suicide victims together with soldiers on their way to fight in the War of the Roses. On a not too unpleasant summer afternoon **Nigel Hinton** briefly ran over some of the locations where casual visitors might find themselves experiencing sudden drops in temperature and encountering shapes from beyond the grave. These include:

The Old Post Office Inn in Milk Street where there is the occasional scent of the merchandise sold by a 'Lavender Lady' to help passersby ward off the smell of the horses that stood outside the building when it was a stagecoach stop along with, of course, the accompanying aroma of horse dung. On a more grisly note the inn is also thought to be the home of a murdered cellar girl who subsequently visited the bedroom of a former guest to help straighten out his untidy belongings and tuck in his bed clothes.

The Hole in the Wall, Shoplatch, where the figure of a young female, Sarah, has been seen to walk through the pub, smiling, before eventually vanishing. It is thought she came to a tragic end in life but no further details are known.

The Nags Head, Wyle Cop, which is understood to be full of ghosts, not least as the result of three suicides on the premises, which led to the top room being sealed off.

The Lion Hotel has a 'Lady in Grey' whilst a jilted army general is understood to walk the floors of the Prince Rupert Hotel amongst the other ghosts residing there.

Those soldiers referred to earlier are believed to be on the way to the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. They sometimes still drop by the Henry Tudor Hotel, occasionally peering in through its windows.

If you ever feel like getting away from some of Shrewsbury's darker corners please note that a few of the town's churches are also best avoided. The church dedicated to Saint Alkmund is reputed to be haunted by a steeplejack who fell to his death after making a drunken bet he could climb to the top of the steeple, whilst a number of visitors to the graveyard at Saint Juliane have heard groaning from the grave of an unknown who was found dead in a room at the Lion Hotel.

In this short space it has only been possible to refer to a few of Shrewsbury's ghosts and spirits but if you want to learn more please note there are countless books on the subject with ghost walks being organised by Shrewsbury Tourist Information office, Sabrina Tours – which has issued online information on a self-guided walk in addition to running ghost boat trips - and Dana Prison, allegedly the fifth most haunted prison in the world.

Reported by Alan Cartwright

Inside the Shadows – 18th July

There can't be that many of us who aren't familiar with or who haven't tapped our feet to the music performed by the Shadows, even if the only member of the group some of us would immediately recognise is the tall lead guitarist with his familiar glasses. It is an instrumental rock group that **Chris Aston** has a great deal of affection for as was shown by the way he told us their story and selected their hits which he played on his guitar.



Chris began by telling us about Hank Marvin and Bruce Welch's early days and their endeavours to become professional guitarists. (Hank had been inspired to learn to play the guitar after hearing Buddy Holly.) In 1958 after his parents had sanctioned a move to London to help Hank's fledgling music career, Cliff Richard's manager, Johnny Foster, offered him a place with the singer's backing group, the Drifters, during preparations for a UK tour. (With a few personnel changes and a change of name the band would continue to back Cliff from 1958 to 1968.) The offer was accepted subject to a place also being found for Hank's Rutherford grammar school friend and fellow guitarist, Bruce. The two of them had previously been playing in an outfit called the Geordie Boys.

The band was forced to undergo that name change already referred to in 1959 to avoid legal action from the American group of the same name, and two of its original members left the same year. 'Jet' Harris (bass guitar) and Tony Meehan (drums) joined it in 1959 but both had left by the end of 1962, Harris largely as a result of problems with alcohol addiction. Brian Bennett (drums and piano) joined the Shadows in 1961 and became the third long stay member of the band with Marvin and Welch (rhythm guitar).

After only managing to get into the lower regions of the charts at first, the Shadows had their first major success with Apache in 1960 and then had 13 consecutive top ten hits, including Kon-Tiki, Wonderful World, Foot Tapper and Dance On between 1961 and 1963. Overall the band had 69 chart singles from the 1950's to the 2000's, 35 in their own right and 34 with Cliff Richard. Although largely an instrumental band the Shadows released a small number of vocal tracks.

Over the years the band has broken up a number of times, starting as far back as 1968, but reunited in the 1970's for more commercial success and later on for occasional tours and concerts.

Reported by Alan Cartwright

Upcoming Meetings

October 17 2024 - A Surprising Egyptian Adventure, Gary Prescott

November 21 2024 - Blood Bikes - The distribution of blood and milk in an emergency

January 16 2025 - Ellesmere Heron Watch

February 20 2025 - Mary's Meals : Charity providing meals to the needy

March 20 2025 - Strange Meetings : A Writer and Author

April 17 2025 - The Millers Tale - Tom Jones

May 15 2025 - A Life on the Ocean Wave

June 19 2025 - An hour of comedy, magic and songs

July 17 2025 - Shot at Dawn - a talk on Desertion during 1914-18 War

GARDENING JOKES

Editor's note: The first Special Interest Group to send me anything for this issue was the Garden Group. This set me off searching for gardening jokes.... I apologise!

My gardener talked to me about edible herbs I could grow. It was sage advice.

I started growing some fungi in my garden, but failed miserably. I guess there's mushroom for improvement.

I used to make loads of money clearing leaves from gardens. I was raking it in.

Yet again, someone has added more soil to my allotment. The plot thickens...

I read a novel about a bloke who had a small garden. Not much of a plot.

How do you make leaves fall off of trees? You don't - they do it autumn-atically

I used to own a wheelbarrow full of four-leaf clovers...but then I realised I really shouldn't push my luck.

What's small, red and whispers? A hoarse radish.

Did you hear about the successful bonsai tree grower? He got so good he ended up looking for a house with a smaller garden.

How do you stop moles digging in your garden? Hide their shovels!

A small boy is helping his dad dig up potatoes. " what I want to know" he says, "is why you buried them in the first place"

Sherlock Holmes was doing some gardening, Watson asked what he was planting. He replied "A lemon tree, my dear Watson".

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Many thanks are due to the convenors who organise and manage our Special Interest Groups. They arrange venues, dates and times and keep interested members informed of any changes. They are not necessarily experts in the subject of their group but enjoy meeting people with similar interests. Some venues are in members' own homes which may limit the size of a group, others are in various halls in Market Drayton and at least two meet in lay-bys or car parks before setting off for a ramble or a visit. Some will make a small charge per meeting to cover the costs of hall hire, refreshments or transport.

If you are interested in joining a Special Interest Group, get in touch with the convenor and they will be happy to give you more details. Contact numbers for convenors are available on the MD u3a website. If you would like to build a new Special Interest Group, let one of the committee know and they will arrange to publicise your ideas amongst members and hopefully help you get started. It would be helpful if you could give some idea of how you think the group might develop but you don't have to think too big. For instance a 'French Conversation' group might only have two members who meet from time to time in a local coffee bar (but hopefully it would be happy to expand if and when others showed interest).

A summary of our current Special Interest Groups is given in the table below. Thanks go to Judy Cowdale for maintaining this list and for arranging occasional meetings where convenors can meet and compare notes or discuss common issues.

SIG	Date	Time	Venue	Cost
Art Appreciation Phil Glover	2 nd Wed	2 pm	Members' houses	
Backgammon George Ruddock	1 st Mon and Wed weekly	11.00	Library (Wednesday)	
Bird watching Colin Barthorpe	3 rd Mon (Sep-Jul)	9.15	Layby: Buntingsdale Road	Transport fuel (shared cars).
British History Carolyn Smalley	3 rd Tue	10.30	Beacon Centre	£2.00 per month
Country Dancing Viv McVittie	Fri Fortnightly	11.00	Scout Hall	£1.50 for hall
Drawing Viv McVittie	Thur Twice monthly	AM & / PM	Convenor's home	Some materials
Gardening Trish Dawson	4 th Wed	2 pm	Beacon Centre	£2.00 Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr/Sep/Nov. Visits: May/June/July/Oct.
Good News at 11.00 Jan & Alan Taylor	1 st Tue	11 am	Gingerbread Man	Own refreshment

'Last Thursday' Lunches George Ruddock	Last Thur	12.30	Selected venue	Cost of meal
Line Dancing Suzanne Edwards	All Fri	10.15	Festival Drayton	£3.00 per session (Term time)
Local History Kath Irving	3 rd Wed	2 pm	Beacon Centre	£1.00 for room hire and refreshment
Music Appreciation Harry Hitchen	1 st Thur		Convenor's home	
Photography Karen Glass	4 th Thur	7 pm	Beacon Centre	About £15 per year
Play Reading Alison Derwent	2 nd Mon	2 pm		
Poetry Reading Meriel Blower	1 st Wed	2.30		
Pub Lunches Candice Danleigh	1 st Wed	12.30	Local Pubs	Cost of meal.
Reading Group 1 Cathy Simpson	4 th Thur	2.30	Hippodrome	£60.00 per group per year
Reading Group 2 Mary Bennett	4 th Wed	10.45	Members' houses	£60.00 per group per year
Reading Group 3 Cathy Simpson	1 st Thur	2.15	Members' houses (alternating)	£60.00 per group per year
Singing for Fun Sarah Pitt	4 th Thur	10.00	Convenor's home	£1.00 donation – Tea/coffee
Walking Group Rob Hackett	2 nd Thur	9.30	Swimming Baths	Car sharing contribution £1.50.

Here are reports from some of our Social Interest Groups:

Backgammon

A Backgammon Group started a few months ago and currently has a small number of active members. Given the size of the group our meetings generally rota round our various homes. And we try and meet approximately every three weeks. But if the membership increases in size, I am sure we can find a suitable venue for a larger group.

In fact, I am a member of the Backgammon group that meets every Wednesday afternoon between 2.00pm – 4.00pm in Market Drayton Library. So, if you are interested, and you don't need to have played in the past, please come and join in. Both groups will make you welcome.

If you want further info drop me an email or give me a ring - georgeruddock@icloud.com or 07860 844763.

Just a few basic facts about the game.

It is a two-player game played with counters and dice on a special board. Its ancestors date back nearly 5,000 years to the regions of Mesopotamia and Persia. The earliest record of backgammon itself dates to 17th-century England.

Backgammon is a game of contrary movement in which each player has fifteen pieces. The backgammon pieces move along twenty-four 'points' according to the roll of two dice. The objective of the game is to move the fifteen pieces around the board and be first to remove them from the board.

Backgammon involves a combination of strategy and luck from rolling dice. While the dice may determine the outcome of a single game, the better player will accumulate the better record over a series of many games. With each roll of the dice, players must choose from numerous options for moving their pieces and anticipate possible counter-moves by the opponent.

George Ruddock

Market Drayton u3a Bird Watching Group

The Bird Watching Group have enjoyed a very successful season, making 10 visits from September to June. We enjoyed a variety of venues, from half day trips to local venues such as Doxey Marshes, Whixall Moss, Venus Pool and Colemere and Wood Lane, to full day trips to Slimbridge, Cors Dyfi and Ynis Hir. We also visited Cannock Chase for an evening trip in search of the elusive Nightjars and Woodcock.

In addition, we visited some new venues such as Parkgate and Hoylake on the Wirral, and Attenborough near Nottingham.

Our away day this year was to Anglesey in June. Twelve members made the trip, some for 2 days and others making it into a week's holiday. The morning was spent at South Stack near Holyhead, where we saw a variety of sea birds, including the Puffin, Guillemot and Kittiwake, as well as the rare Chough. Lunch was taken in the café before the Group travelled up to Cemlyn Bay in the North West of the island. Here the Group enjoyed their first look at the huge Tern Colony, which breeds there every year. The majority were Sandwich Terns, interspersed with Common and Arctic Terns. It was fascinating watching the adults fly over our heads into the Bay in search of Sand Eels to feed their young. We also saw a rare Mediterranean Gull. In total we saw over 50 species during the day, a very healthy number. Our visit ended with a Group Meal at The Trearddur Bay Hotel before we all dispersed to our accommodation.

The total number of species seen during the season was 125, a record for the Group, and a good target for next season.

We ended our season in August with a Group Meal in The Wharf at Goldstone, where we planned our programme for September 2024 to June 2025.

New members are always welcome. If you would like to join, or perhaps go on one trip to see what we do, please contact the Group Convenor Colin Barthorpe on 01630 654954, 07976 769936 or colin.barthorpe@gmail.com

The Garden Group

The garden group have recently turned over a new leaf and Trish Dawson is now their convenor. Many thanks go to Beryl Edwards, their previous convenor, for her sterling work. Trish can be contacted on 07977 561 754.

Meetings are usually on the fourth Wednesday of the month. There is a £2 charge each meeting to cover room hire and refreshment.

- Sept 25 Programme/discussion: Gardeners Question Time
Competition: Seeds & berries in a jam jar.
- Oct 23 Autumn Visit - Goldstone Hall 2.00pm
(£8pp garden visit, £4-75 tea after)
- Nov 27 Discussion/research: Xmas traditions
Xmas quiz/Bring & Share
Competition: Xmas decoration.
- 2025
- Jan 22 Speaker: Chris Tatam 'Making a garden from scratch'
Competition: 'winter display'
- Feb 26 Snowdrop Walk @ Attingham Park NT
Meet at Coffee Shop
- Mar 26 Speaker: "Green Gardening & Heritage
Seed library.
Competition: A successful cutting
- Apr 23 Speaker: Mike King 'Sarracenias'
Plants for sale.
Competition: my favourite pest control
- May 28 Visit to Mike King's National Collection @ Wrockwardine Wood,
TF2 7BP. Travel in cars.
- June 25 Visit: David Austin Roses, Albrighton
Travel in cars/restaurant/shop
- July 19 11.00am Web Sweet Pea Show Floral displays/sales
Lunch in Town Hall
2.30 VISIT "Sunningdale" 9 Mill Street, Wem, SY4 5ED
NGS garden
*** please note day change to Saturday*
- July 23 Garden safari

*Editor's note: My gardening is truly a failure
For despite all the paraphernalia
Like forks, trowels and hoes,
An extendable hose,
I still cannot grow a dahlia.*



Country Dancing Group

What is Country Dancing?

A **country dance** is any of a very large number of social dances of a type that originated in the British Isles

Technically, it is the repeated execution of a predefined sequence of figures (steps / movements), carefully designed to fit a fixed length of music, performed by a group of people, usually in couples, in one or more sets. The figures involve interaction with your partner and / or with other dancers, usually with a progression so that you dance with everyone in your set.

Don't worry if that makes no sense, basically you just 'walk' around in different patterns. You don't have to know or remember what to do because there is a 'caller' who teaches the dance and then calls the steps out as you dance.

Why is joining the Country Dancing group a good idea?

Any form of dancing is accepted to be great exercise and good for your general health and wellbeing. There are hundreds of articles on the internet telling you that dancing can help to improve cardiovascular health, muscle strength, flexibility, coordination and balance, raise your mood, help your memory. Country dancing is also a social activity and most importantly **great fun**.

As with taking up any form of exercise if you are worried because you have an underlying health condition or feel that you are very unfit you might want to talk to your doctor before joining the group. It's a good idea to let the caller know if you think you are going to struggle. Nobody will force you to dance, you can always sit one out.

More information about the group can be found on the Market Drayton u3a website.
Or contact Viv on 01630661318 or by email at viv.mcvittie@me.com.

Introducing the Group

- There has been a u3a Country Dancing Group for over 20 years! It's first session was on 28th October 2002. We meet at the Market Drayton Scout Headquarters in on alternate Fridays from 11am – 12noon noon.
- Membership numbers suffered after Covid but are now beginning to pick up.
- Sessions cost £1.50 to cover the cost of the hall. If funds begin build up we have a free session.
- Sessions are lead by Viv Mcvittie, who also calls for the TernValley Tinkers Ceilidh Band.
- During a typical session we usually dance around 8 to 10 different dances selected from a range of styles (circle, long set and square dances) to recorded music (mostly jigs and reels).

FAQs about Country Dancing?

Q: Who can do country dancing?

A: Really anyone who wants to. If you can walk and count to 8 you then you are very well equipped to have a go.

Q: Will there be other men there?

A: Yes, just under 50% of class members are men.

Q: I don't have a partner, can I still come along?

A: Simple answer is yes of course you can. There will always be someone to dance with.

Q: How will I know what to do?

A: The caller will teach you the dance, and then call out instructions all the way through the dance.

Q: What if I get it wrong?

A: No one will care. Everyone gets it wrong sometimes. We don't take things seriously. The emphasis is always on enjoying ourselves. No-one will get annoyed with you or laugh at you.

Q: I don't think I have any sense of rhythm or general dancing ability, but it sounds fun. Could I give it a try.

A: Yes, Yes, Yes! You will be welcomed by the caller and the group. They will help you and support you, and if you really don't enjoy yourself there is no commitment.

Q: Do I need to wear anything special?

A: No, but a flattish pair of comfortable light shoes are a good idea.

Local History Group

The Buttercross

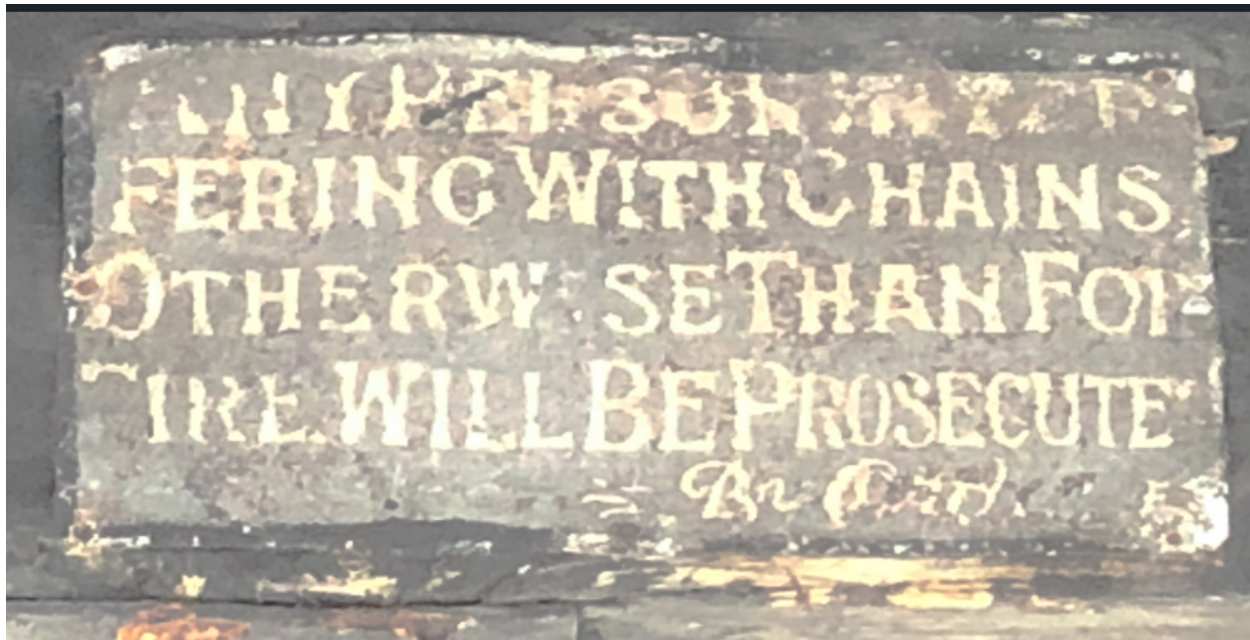
2024 is the 200th anniversary of the building of the Buttercross which stands in the heart of town at the site of the medieval market.



Buttercross about 1900

The present Buttercross, sometimes called the Butter Market, with its pediment and fourteen plain Truscan columns was built in 1824 to provide a sheltered place for farmers' wives to sell dairy produce and poultry. It probably replaced two older buildings which had been converted to serve as the Butter Cross after the demolition of the nearby Market House in 1780.

The gable end bears the date 1824 and a raven, the symbol of the Corbet family, Lords of the Manor. The eagle-eyed will notice the paving beneath the Butter Cross has two circular marks indicating the position of previous columns. Five of the present columns are replacements, installed when the building was renovated in 1972. Some of the slabs in the floor are of rougher stones and may be a remnant of the former building on this site. The small belfry on top of the Butter Cross houses two copper bells which were rung to authorise the start of market trading. They also sounded the alarm to call the horse drawn fire engine in case of fire. The fire engine was housed in a small building near St Mary's Church and the horse had to be fetched to pull it. It is said that at the sound of the bell the horse would run away! On one of the beams under the roof there is still a notice forbidding interference with the chains that rang the bells. However they were rung for the relief of Mafeking during the South African war in 1900, when peace was announced in 1918 and again on VE day.



A newspaper report of the 1950's said that the Buttercross had been built by public subscription to mark the coming of age of the Lord of the Manor, Sir Reginald Corbet, and that the event was celebrated with the roasting of an ox and tea parties for the children and the elderly. It is a charming story but it simply isn't true! Sir Corbet Corbet, the last of the line of the Adderley Corbets died in 1823 and was succeeded by a cousin, Richard Corbet, the second son of Andrew Corbet of Acton Reynald. Perhaps the building was a way of the new landlords establishing their authority on the town.

The Buttercross has become the iconic symbol of Market Drayton appearing on street furniture, letter headings and the town's logo but it was nearly demolished in the 1950's. Faced with a hefty repair bill to make it safe, the council wanted to demolish it, considering it to be "of no historic value." There was considerable opposition from local people, led by Richard Meadon, and the final council vote was 10 to 2 in favour of retaining it. It survived a second move to demolish it to make way for traffic in 1972 but was again saved and repaired.

Two hundred years after its construction this much loved building is still used by market traders and often features in town events.

Kathleen Irving, Local History Group.

Drawing group

The drawing group was set up to allow people who felt they couldn't draw to have a go in a safe and encouraging environment. As the convenor I have always have been of the opinion that everyone can draw. What we can't all do is see like an artist. Well I think I have proved my point. We now have 2 small groups of far more confident artists, who can draw and who are getting better all the time. We do have room for one or two new members, but I am aware that new people might not feel comfortable coming to an established group. If anyone is interested I would be very happy to run a few introductory sessions so you can gain a bit of confidence before joining the others. Please do get in touch.

I know there are art groups in Market Drayton for more established artists, but if anyone would be interested in a u3a art group and perhaps would be happy to help set one up, I would love to hear from you too. I am thinking along the lines of people bringing their own media but everyone working on the same topic rather than everyone doing their own thing.

You can email me at viv.mcvittie@me.com or phone 01630661358

Viv McVittie

Photography group

The Photography group continue to meet monthly at the Beacon Centre to view member's photographs on a given topic. Recent topics have included 'Little and Large', 'Water', 'Wild Flowers/Plants' and 'Movement' which have involved members either getting out and about to find suitable subjects or, occasionally, finding inspiration closer to home.

Members interested in joining the group should contact the convenor, Karen Glass, who will give them more details.

Recent choices as 'Picture of the Month'.



Subject: Water
Photograph by Rose Jessop



Subject: Movement
Photograph by Sue Mayer

Singing for fun group

In April the 'Singing for Fun' group entertained the members of the Wayfarers who meet at Raven House. We have been several times and always enjoyed it, indeed we sang carols and gave them each, instead of figgy pudding, a Gingerbread Man kindly donated by our very own gingerbread makers, Image on Food. This was a great success.

Our most recent experience was probably one of the best despite there only being a small number of us able to do it. We sang all the songs they love, choosing ones in which there are actions and words so they can all join in which they do with great energy. We completed this joyful morning with everyone dancing to renditions from 'Frozen' and 'Beauty and the Beast' and played on their computer. The young people and staff were on their feet, waving arms, dancing together with smiles on their faces. So we joined in. The age range must have been from teens to over 80! It was excellent exercise for us all. We had 2 soloists singing their choice of pop songs with actions. Often this can be from a young person who has few 'people skills'.

We always enjoy our visits there. We feel energised and oh so positive. The young people, despite their disabilities, are a delight and it is particularly pleasing when at the start of the entertainment the room is fairly quiet but gradually sound increases and grows into involvement of all and joy.

As an aside, when the group see us in town their faces light up with recognition. Music can indeed bring about a stimulating togetherness. We plan to continue to sing to this appreciative group.

Sarah Pitt

Walking group

The Market Drayton U3A Walking Group is made up of like minded people who enjoy walking and socialising at the same time. The convenor of this group is Rob Hackett who has taken over the role from David Haynes. Rob can be contacted on 07434546658 or by email at rob.hackett7@gmail.com.



Our walks take place on the second Thursday of the month and are relatively easy, about 5 miles long with a stop in the middle of the walk for a snack. Each month a different person will volunteer to find and lead a walk. The walks are usually within 30 minutes travel time from the swimming baths, which is where most of the group will meet at 9:30am. Details of the walks are always put on our group page on the website and also sent out via email to members by the convenor prior to the walk date.

New walkers are always welcome so if you want to try out this group to see if it is for you, just come along and join us for a walk.

RECIPES

A recent online tutorial organised by the central u3a office saw over 700 people try to book a place to find out more about air fryers. On their website (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities/u3a-air-fryer-community>) they are collecting recipes as to how people are using this 'new technology'. Here are the first two recipes to be published.

Stir fried cabbage, with courgette, asparagus, and chilli

Serves 3-4, as a side dish or 2 as a main course.

To air-fry certain vegetables, it is a good idea to use a little water alongside some oil to help the cooking process.

Ingredients

½ a Savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
1 red chilli, de-seeded and chopped
6 asparagus spears, trimmed, and each spear cut into 3, optional but nice
2 small courgettes, sliced
1 small red onion, sliced
1/2 tsp dried mixed herbs
1 tsp sesame seeds
6 sprays water
10 sprays olive oil
Salt and ground black pepper
To Serve: soy sauce

Method

1. Pre-heat air-fryer to 200C.
2. Put prepared cabbage, chilli, asparagus, courgette, onion, herbs, and sesame seeds, into a large mixing bowl. Add water and oil. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Toss together well.
3. Turn prepared vegetables into air-fryer basket, spreading out as much as possible. Add sesame seeds and a seasoning of salt and pepper. Air-fry for 6-8 minutes, stirring or shaking basket twice during cooking, until vegetables are lightly charred in places, but retaining crispness. Serve immediately, sprinkled with soy sauce, to taste.

Apple and frangipane puddings

Serves: 6, but recipe may be halved, to serve 3. Cooking time remains as given. Use either individual, 240ml size teacups or ramekins to cook the puddings.

If preferred, use an additional 50g ground almonds instead of the flour. Ideal for those with gluten intolerance. Cook the puddings in batches if necessary. Cooking time remains as given.

Ingredients

450g Bramley cooking apples, peeled and chopped

60g caster or light brown sugar

For the sponge batter 100g softened butter and 100g caster sugar

2 large eggs, beaten

1 tbsp milk

1 and a half tsp almond essence

50g ground almonds

50g self raising flour

Method

- 1 Prepare the apple puree. Put apples and sugar into a medium size saucepan. Add 2 Tablespoons water. Simmer gently until apples soften completely. This will take about 5-7 minutes. Remove pan from heat and beat into a lumpy puree, using a wooden spoon.
- 2 Divide the apple puree between each of 6 lightly greased teacups or ramekins. Level the surface.
- 3 Make cake batter. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the butter and sugar, using a handheld electric beater, until light and creamy. Gradually beat in the egg, a little at a time, adding a little flour to prevent the mixture curdling. Fold in the remaining flour and ground almonds, with the milk and the almond essence.
- 4 Divide pudding batter evenly between the 6 ramekins or cups. Level the surface.
- 5 Bake for 20-23 minutes at 170C, until well risen and golden and a sharp knife, inserted into centre of puddings, comes out clean.
- 6 Remove from air fryer, allow to stand for 5 minutes before running a knife around the edge and turning puddings out onto tea plates. Serve the puddings, with any remaining apple puree and hot custard.

Editor's note:

Why leave it at that? If anyone has a favourite recipe that they would like to share, whether it uses an air-fryer or not, pass it on to the editors and we will consider it for our next issue. If we get enough we may even publish a 'special edition' magazine solely of recipes. But please don't just copy something you have found in a recipe book or on another website - how about recipes that have been passed on down your family or one of your own with an original twist to a classic idea.

PUZZLE PAGE - (ANSWERS ON FINAL PAGE)

MATHS SQUARE

6	x		-		41
+		x		-	
	+	1	-		8
-		÷		+	
	x		-	5	7
12		2		10	

Here are six sums that have some of the numbers missing. The aim is to enter the numbers from 1 - 9 exactly once into the empty cells to create sums that total the values shown at the end of that row or column. Perform arithmetic from left to right and top to bottom. There is at least one correct answer.

9 LETTER SQUARE

Find as many words of four letters or more from the letters in the grid. You can only use a letter as many times as it is shown in the grid, and there is at least one 9-letter word. Each word must contain the central letter - in this case I. Hint: In this puzzle there are two 9-letter words.

C	E	M
E	I	D
T	D	A

MISSING VOWELS NAME THIS POEM

NXN DDD KBL KHN
 STT LYP LSR DMD CR
 WHR LPH THS CRD RVR RN
 THR GHC VRN SMS RLS STM N
 DWN TSN LSS S

Vowels have been removed and consonants re-spaced in this excerpt from a famous poem.

NAME THAT LYRIC

- 1 Gracious, Noble, Victorious
- 2 Napoleon, Surrender, Destiny
- 3 Fantasy, Landslide, Reality
- 4 Millionaire, Flunkies, Champagne
- 5 Fandango, Cartwheels, Seasick
- 6 Hope, Mother, Free

Some songs are recognisable by just a few words within their lyrics. Can you recall which six songs have these words in their lyrics?

POETRY CORNER

Two members have submitted poems that they have written. Perhaps other members write poetry and would like to see it in print. Or perhaps we have some short story writers among us. The editors would welcome any contributions which members would like to share.

Ginger & Spice Festival

In a market town beside a canal
A festival blooms with fragrant delight
Ginger and spice dance in colourful grace
Raising the town's morale

The air is alive with scent
As shops lay out their wares
In a market town beside a canal
This festival is a major event

Everyone is there to savour the intoxication of spice
Visitors come and join the town's people
In a market town beside a canal
Which seems to have become an eastern paradise

So many spices from far afield
Telling stories of cultures unknown
In a market town beside a canal
Where histories and mysteries are revealed

Gingerbread with its warm embrace
Brings zest with each bite
In a market town beside a canal
You can see pleasure on everyone's face

Cinnamon, cardamom, cloves take you breath away
A kaleidoscope of wondrous spices
In a market town beside a canal
They are the backbone to a festival on an Autumn day.

George Ruddock

Twenty-Five Years

It's silver jubilee time
Twenty-five years have flown by
And many of us have passed our prime
Yet we have turned up for the tea

Along the years we have experienced trials and tribulations
But like a sturdy tree, our roots run deep
And we have dealt with all frustrations
As we march through the years

We have built memories along the way
We have shared laughter, joy and tears

But every memory is a treasure, forever to stay
In our minds and our hearts

So, now we reflect on twenty-five years
On our journey side by side
And for those now gone we shed a tear
While remembering their contribution

We now step forward into the future
Together in purpose
As Market Drayton's U3A is just super
In fulfilling its role

So, raise a teacup, let's toast today
A bright tomorrow
As the last twenty-five years have paved the way
For the next twenty-five.

George Ruddock (written to celebrate MD u3a's twenty-fifth anniversary in 2023)

Where do we go from here?

Where do we go from here?
What will the future hold,
Will we move blindly forward,
Or learn from the lessons of old?

Where do we go from here?
Will we continue to fight,
Or reflect on our previous conflicts,
And have world peace in our sight?

Where do we go from here?
Will our planet live on,
Or are we hell bent to destroy it,
And keep doing everything wrong?

Where do we go from here?
Can we determine our fate,
Or should a few power-crazed leaders,
All of our futures dictate?

Where do we go from here?
Will we bury our heads in the sand,
While the poor get steadily poorer,
And the rich reap the fat of the land?

Wherever we go from here?
Whatever the future may hold,
Let us pray for the sake of our children,
That we learn from the lessons of old.

Viv McVittie

Homeward Bound

Westward, westward, westward we go,
Passing through towns with names we don't know.
Onward, onward, onward we go
Sometimes quite fast, sometimes quite slow.

Past fields of cows, past hedges and trees,
Ferns next the track swing in our breeze.
Past houses and churches, past vast factories,
Sights that amuse us, sights that displease.

Westward, westward, westward we go,
Passing through stations with names we don't know
Onward, onward, onward we go
What time we'll get home we really don't know.

Past fields of rape, past fields of wheat,
We gape through the window as if glued to our seat.
We pass over rivers, we pass under roads,
See cars, vans and lorries transporting their loads.

Westward, westward, westward we go,
Getting closer to home and the hills that we know.
Onward, onward, onward we go,
Getting closer to Wales, the land we love so.

Viv McVittie (written on the train from Paddington to Swansea when she lived in Wales)

ROAD TRIP - The Wild Atlantic Way

Two years ago, we undertook a Road Trip around The NC500, a scenic driving holiday around the North of Scotland from Inverness. We thoroughly enjoyed that experience, and it inspired us to take on another driving holiday. We decided to tackle The Wild Atlantic Way, a 2500 km route around the West Coast of Ireland from Kinsale in County Cork to Malin Head in County Donegal. Having previously visited much of the South West of Ireland around Kerry and County Clare, we decided to tackle the part of the route from Galway northwards to Donegal, an area which was new to us.



We took the ferry from Holyhead to Dublin, and spent one night near Dublin before travelling West to Galway to begin the tour. Our first day was a very scenic route along the coast of Galway Bay, winding around small fishing ports and lovely little inlets to the quaint little market town of Clifden, where we spent two nights.

Day 2 was spent touring the Connemara Coast North West of Clifden, starting with the spectacular Sky Road from right outside our B&B.



On Day 3 we moved on to Kilmeena, a small settlement about 5 kms north of Westport. Although Clifden and Westport are only 75 miles apart, our route was around 150 miles as we wound our way around the many bays, beaches and settlements to Louisburgh and then past Crough Patrick, Ireland's Holy Mountain with all its history. Our B&B in Kilmeena had beautiful views and walks around the Loch.

Day 4 saw us travel North West from Westport to Achill Island and the towering cliffs and mountain roads to the beach at Keel Strand and onward to Keem Bay.

Day 5 was our longest day of travel, around 160 miles to Killala. We drove over bleak peat bog moors to the town of Belmullet and onward down the Mullet Peninsular to the historic Black Sod Pier. We then travelled East along the coast to Killala, a small but interesting market town.

Day 6 saw us taking a little rest, spending the morning in Ballina with a walk around Belleek Woods along the banks of the River Moy before returning to Killala for a very nice lunch. The afternoon was spent with a walk on the cliffs of Downpatrick Head an area which played its part in the Second World War as a huge sign, EIRE, was established on the ground to let the British Pilots returning from their flights across the Channel that they were now in Neutral Territory.

Day 7 was another long journey along the Wild Atlantic Way through Sligo and Donegal to the fishing port of Killybegs where our B&B, about 3 km outside the town had wonderful views over Fintra Beach. This was still a very interesting journey past many golden beaches, most of them totally deserted.



Day 8 began, in our view, the best part of our journey. We travelled West of Killybegs to the spectacular Slieve League Cliffs, said to be the highest cliffs in Europe standing at over 600 metres. To get there we caught a shuttle bus from the Visitor Centre around 4 km to

the summit. From there we moved on to Glencolumcille Folk Village, a very interesting museum depicting the living conditions of the people in the Region over many centuries. We returned to Killybegs through The Glengesh Mountain Pass.



We continued our holiday on Day 9 with another very long day, to our final stop at the historic Rathmullan Hall situated on the banks of Lough Swilly. We travelled through Dungloe and Burtonport, before turning North again through wonderful countryside, beaches and cliffs before turning South and onward to Rathmullan. Those two days at Killybegs and onward were the most interesting of a superb holiday.

Day 10, our final day was marred by heavy rain and very high winds, but we travelled North again to Rossguill and Fanad Head Lighthouse. The weather on our trip had been absolutely glorious, particularly the first week with lovely sunshine and high temperatures, so we were destined to experience real authentic West Ireland weather before returning home.

Day 11 was spent driving down through ROI and Northern Ireland to the charming town of Trim, around 35 km from Dublin for our last night before catching the ferry back to Holyhead and home.

Altogether we drove just over 1000 miles, of which around 550 was along The Wild Atlantic Way.

What did we learn from our trip?

- The West of Ireland is a very wild and beautiful country.
- Fuel in Ireland is around 10p per litre dearer than in England and, unlike England, petrol is dearer than diesel.
- England can learn a lot from the Irish about the state of roads. During the whole of our trip, we encountered less than 10 potholes, even on the most remote coastal and mountain routes.
- However, many of the roads are very undulating due to the geology of the area.

- If you are contemplating doing a similar holiday, TAKE YOUR TIME! Like the NC500, many drivers rush round these routes so they can say they have driven it. They miss so much of this wild and wonderful country. Whilst most roads are passable, some of the route is single track with passing places. Be patient. On many main roads there are overtaking lanes, marked by an orange line. It is the custom, although not universal, for heavy goods and slower traffic to pull over and let the faster traffic pass.
- The Irish people are very friendly. Our accommodation was very good, and the breakfasts were superb. Be aware that, unless you are in or close to a town, you may have to travel in search of an evening meal.
- Be aware that to do the route justice you will have long days. I was driving for between 4 and 6 hours most days, mostly on small coastal roads where to do 30mph is very good! Also be aware that it is often difficult to find coffee stops unless you are in a town. It is a good idea to take a flask of coffee each day.

All in all, a very enjoyable holiday, and one we would recommend if you like wild and beautiful scenery and you like driving.

Photographs by Colin & Sandra Barthorpe

PUZZLE PAGE ANSWERS

MATHS SQUARE

6	x	8	-	7	41
+		x		-	
9	+	1	-	2	8
-		÷		+	
3	x	4	-	5	7

12 2 10

9 LETTER SQUARE

The two nine-letter words were DECIMATED and MEDICATED. The editors found 48 words of 4 letters or more. How did you do?

MISSING VOWELS NAME THIS POEM

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Trough caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

From the opening stanza of 'Kubla Khan' or 'A Vision in a Dream' by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

NAME THAT LYRIC

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Gracious, Noble, Victorious | The National Anthem |
| 2 | Napoleon, Surrender, Destiny | Waterloo |
| 3 | Fantasy, Landslide, Reality | Bohemian Rhapsody |
| 4 | Millionaire, Flunkies, Champagne | Who wants to be a millionaire |
| 5 | Fandango, Cartwheels, Seasick | A whiter shade of pale |
| 6 | Hope, Mother, Free | Land of hope and glory |