

## Thoughts From Our Chairman...

I recently attended the Northamptonshire Network of u3a's. One of the issues that came up was "how to get more men involved in the u3a". We also discussed this topic at our committee meeting this week.

It was proposed that men prefer to get involved in practical things, something that you notice when we have nice weather, when all you can hear are lawn mowers and jet washers! When the weather is not so nice, I see men doing stuff in garages. It is acknowledged that not all men follow these principles, however probably a large percentage.

In Yorkshire, we have an actual word for it – 'fettling', meaning to tidy, clean, mend or fix, or put something in order.

Here in Daventry & District u3a just under 30%, of our overall membership of 310 are men. The groups, as you would expect, that have the largest proportion of men are those that have a 'doing' element.

I have done some calculations from the membership of our groups, and those which have more than 40% of members who are men are: -

Climate Change (43%), Golf (46%), History (48%), Photography (52%), Motoring (56%) with the largest of all going to our new group Accoustics (69%).

Why is it important that we support and attract more men?

Mental health for men over 50 is heavily impacted by loneliness, physical decline and a loss of purpose, with depression affecting about 22% of men over 65. Older men are more socially isolated than women, as the latter tend to maintain a wider social network and are better at fostering friendships. Therefore, it is important to support everyone.



If you would like to start a group which reflects your interests, please contact our Group Co-Ordinator.

This could include such things as walking cricket, football (or netball), or maybe pickleball.

Or perhaps more cerebral interests, e.g., computers/AI, astronomy.

Or indeed just "fettling!"

Don't forget the u3a on-line events.

## Meetings Coming Up.....

April 16th 2026

### The Water Babies, Charles Kingsley Michael Burton

This classic fairy tale, beloved by all ages, also served as a critique of child labour and poverty. It contributed to the advancement of women's rights, environmental awareness, improved urban water standards, and helped end the Victorian practice of using young boys as chimney sweeps.

May 21st 2026

### The Sinking And Raising Of The Mary Rose - Bob Foster

Bob volunteers as a speaker for the Mary Rose Trust, sharing the story of Henry VIII's favourite battleship sinking off Southsea. The shipwreck, discovered in the 1970s, was raised and displayed at Portsmouth Docks.

### Who Said That....

Here are 10 famous catchphrases for British TV.

Can you name the character and the programme?

Answers on page 9



1. Bernie The Bolt....
2. Don't Panic!!
3. I Don't Believe It..
4. I'm Free...
5. Didn't He Do Well...
6. You Dirty Old Man....
7. Silly Old Moo....
8. Lovely Jubbly...
9. I Have A Cunning Plan...
10. You Stupid Boy...

## So Much Has Happened In April.....

**1989** World Wide Web (WWW) was first launched in the public domain by British scientist Tim Berners-Lee.

The Web was originally created and developed to allow scientists in different universities and institutes around the world to share information.

**1983** The first ever cordless telephone went on sale in Britain. It was made by Fidelity and British Telecom and sold for £170.

**1981** The first space shuttle flight occurred when *Columbia* was launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Center with astronauts John Young and Robert Crippen on board.

**1968** Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King was shot and killed by a sniper while standing on a balcony outside his second-floor room at the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee.

**1964** English rock band, The Beatles, filled the top five places of the US singles chart with 'Please Please Me', 'I Want to Hold Your Hand', 'She Loves You', 'Twist and Shout', and 'Can't Buy Me Love'.

**1948** Palestinian Jews declared their independence from British rule and established the new State of Israel – the first Jewish state in 2,000 years.

**1945** In his hideaway bunker in Berlin, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler shot himself while Eva Braun, his wife of 48 hours and former mistress, took a cyanide capsule. In line with Hitler's instructions, both of their bodies were later burned.

**1912** The world's largest ocean liner, RMS *Titanic*, hit an iceberg at 11:40 pm off of Newfoundland and sank in the early hours of 15th April – just four days after she left Southampton on her maiden voyage.

**1896** After a 1500-year break, the first modern-era Summer Olympics were held in Athens, Greece, from 6th to 15th April. Except for US athletes, all participants were European, and over 65% were Greek.

**1858** On the second attempt, Big Ben, the largest bell in the world, was finally ready to be hung in the clock tower of Westminster Palace in London. The bell weighs more than 13 tonnes.

**1770** English naval explorer James Cook reached the east coast of Australia, where he began proceeding north to Botany Bay in Sydney.

**1748** The ruins of Pompeii were rediscovered by Spanish engineer Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre and his team. The city had been buried under millions of tonnes of volcanic ash after Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD.

**1721** Robert Walpole became Britain's first ever Prime Minister. In 1735, he received the gift of 10 Downing Street from King George II, making it the permanent residence of the Prime Minister. Serving from 1721 to 1742, Walpole is the longest-serving Prime Minister in British history.

**1633** England got its first ever glimpse of a new fruit – the banana – when Thomas Johnson displayed a bunch in his shop in Holborn, London.

**1616** Famous playwright and poet, William Shakespeare, died on his 52nd birthday.

**1509** After the death of his father, Henry VIII became King of England. He's most famous for having six wives and breaking with the Roman Catholic church.

## Early Sixties Snippets....Lawrence Morgan

### Bob – A – Job....

Sixties Snippets  
Bob- a-Job  
Lawrence Morgan  
Come April  
Every good boy scout  
Was out on reconnaissance in their neighbourhood  
Looking for kindly households  
Targets for a Bob-a-Job  
The really diligent, ready for anything  
Mow the expansive lawn, and weed the flower beds  
No problem  
The less willing asked themselves  
What's the point of weeding  
They'll grow back in a jiffy  
But had to do it anyway  
But there was always a hope  
A kindly soul might open the front door  
Any jobs  
Well, nothing comes to mind  
Come to think of it  
Just sweep the path that will do  
And here is a nice shiny shilling  
The scouting movement taught discipline  
Taught skills like knot tying  
Apart from the reef knot and the half hitch  
Mostly not retained in adult life  
Took boys on camp  
Digging latrines  
And cooking around a campfire  
Sleeping on the ground  
Fun for some and certainly character-forming  
But it was all a subterfuge  
It's real purpose  
To ready youngsters for the next war  
Some bright sparks, though, questioned  
It's premise of a conventional war  
Surely in the atomic age  
Nations will nuke the hell out of each other  
Obliteration of cities the name of the game  
Westminster the PM, and the cabinet  
The generals and the strategists  
Relocated to a bunker deep underground  
Difficult to see how their hard-won proficiency badges  
Could be relevant in the nuclear winter

But for the moment  
For scouts up and down the land  
Who picked the wrong door to give a knock  
The burning question  
How long am I going to have to toil  
Bob-a-Job is supposed to be fun  
Not an opportunity for the crafty  
To get all those nasty jobs around the house done  
And further down the line  
As the hormones in their bodies surged  
Their resentment turned to rebellion  
They told their Mum and Dad  
I've left the scouts, job done



# From Your Group Coordinator....



## WOW! Open Day Was Certainly Busy.....



WELL.....What a superb OPEN DAY we had this year! The best we've ever had. Thanks to our amazing GROUP LEADERS who turned out in force to showcase their groups to our visitors and other members.

Thank you also to all those members who attended and renewed their membership, the members who provided refreshments throughout the afternoon, the members who helped sign people in, and of course, our hardworking Chair and Committee who made sure that everything ran smoothly and efficiently. THANK YOU ALL.

We had over 150 people through the door and signed up 20 new members on the day. More new members have joined since, and it is hoped that we will pass our pre-COVID membership total once you have all renewed your membership. SO... if you haven't renewed YOUR membership yet, do it now!!

Remember your u3a is here for the members by the members, and that means you too! Help to make your u3a even more vibrant and exciting.

Brenda Mills. Group Coordinator and Committee Member

## Round Up The Troops – Here Come The Groups !!

The new Acoustics Group, 'The Minstrels', is having its first meeting on Monday, 13th April at 2.00 pm in the Coffee Lounge at the Community Centre in Ashby Road, Daventry. If you are interested in finding out more about this group, then go along or contact Brenda – details below.

An interesting new Current Affairs Discussion Group is being started. So, again, if you are interested in finding out more about this group, then please contact Brenda – details below.

Do you speak German? If so, would you consider starting a German conversation group to encourage others, with, perhaps, a 'smattering' of the language, to meet up and improve their skills? If so, then contact Brenda – details below.

If you have a particular knowledge or skill that you would like to share with others, then let me know. There may be other members just waiting to join you. We could start up a new group to help you and all our members to Learn, Laugh and Live!!

The opportunities are endless.....

For further information on any of the above please contact  
Brenda Mills your Groups' Coordinator on  
[u3agroupsDaventry@gmail.com](mailto:u3agroupsDaventry@gmail.com)



# History Group....

## William Philpott

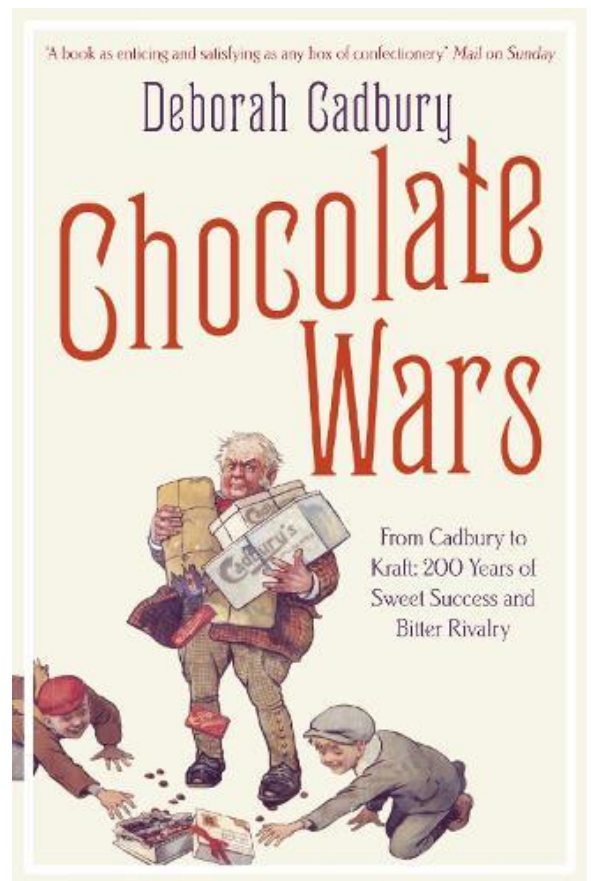
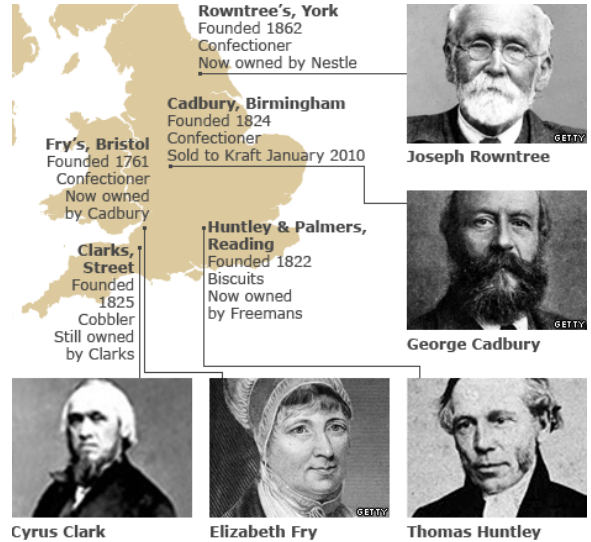
Catherine Parry delivered a talk to both history groups with the intriguing title 'Chocolate Wars'.

The Religious Society of Friends, more commonly known as Quakers, formed in the seventeenth century.

As Protestant non-conformists, they had simple beliefs and opposed what they regarded as dogma of the established religions. Quakers were active in what today would be called human rights, and this extended to business, in which some leading families were very active. They were opposed to the sale and consumption of alcohol, which was seen as the cause of many social problems and were also pacifists and campaigned against slavery.

In 1879, the Cadbury family established a factory in the Bournville area of Birmingham to produce chocolate, but they were not alone in this venture. The Rowntree family set up a chocolate producing factory in York, while Fry established premises in Bristol, and despite their Quaker connections, we're very much in commercial competition with one another.

However, despite Quaker values, cocoa beans were sourced from parts of Africa and, in particular, some of the Portuguese colonies, which presented a dilemma for Quaker owned businesses in this sector.



## U3a Wine Appreciation Group ... Chardonnay!

On Monday, 16th March, group member Pat Reeve gave a talk on wines produced from the Chardonnay grape. Her introduction highlighted the changing tastes consumers have for wine. Chardonnay, once the wine grape of choice, at its peak was so popular that people were naming their children after it. But the often over-oaked wines did drop out of fashion as wine drinkers headed towards the fruitier dry wines produced from Sauvignon Blanc. In fact, when those favouring white wines were asked what wine they would like, the standard reply became anything but Chardonnay.

Pat commenced her defence of the berated grape variety by reminding everyone that Chardonnay is a constituent of Champagne, Chablis and Puligny Montrachet. The Burgundy wines can mature for several years, with vintages going back over 20 years being sought after.

Pat chose 4 young Chardonnay wines from the supermarket shelves available for immediate drinking in the price range of £7 - £9. The selection coming from Argentina, Australia, France and New Zealand. Pat joined the 16 members of the group in tasting the selection for the first time.

The common characteristic of the wines being the flavour of the fruit rather than any overriding addition or ageing. One wine being likened to Sauvignon Blanc, and the Australian wine with its full flavour was suggested as an ideal accompaniment for a BBQ. Perhaps in part due to its quirky name of Greasy Fingers.



The session prompted a lot of discussion, not just in the meeting but in the dedicated WhatsApp group afterwards, where Pat received praise for her presentation.

The next meeting of the group will take place on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> May, at its regular venue, the Ashby Road Community Centre. For this meeting, there will be a presentation made by a group member's daughter who is in the wine trade.



## Art Appreciation Group.... Brenda Mills

### An Inspirational Afternoon Was Had By All !!



The Art Appreciation Group were treated to a most interesting talk and demonstration at their April meeting.

Christine Woods, a traditional Canal-ware artist, cabinet maker and restorer based at Braunston Marina, told us about how, having bought a narrowboat shell which she spent 7 years restoring, she evolved from being a wood craftsman to becoming interested in the decorative painting found on the traditional working narrow boats.

Christine has based her style of painting on the work of two traditional artists who are well known in the canal world, namely Frank Mercer and Ron Hough. Christine works in the 'Braunston Style' developed by them and based on the colours they used. This 'style' is illustrated in the photos taken on the day, showing examples of her work.



Christine gave us a broad insight into the history of canal-ware art, telling us how, despite the hardworking lives they led, their highly decorated boats and everyday household utilities were the pride and joy of the canalboat people.

She then went on to give us an excellent demonstration of how the artwork was built up gradually, balancing out the colours and the flowers on whatever was being decorated, with the beautiful red roses being the dominant feature in her work.

A truly inspirational afternoon indeed.....



If you are interested in joining the  
Art Appreciation Group,  
Please contact Angela Adams on  
07957 995944  
or Brenda Mills on  
[brendymills@sky.com](mailto:brendymills@sky.com).



## New Experiences & Adventures Group.....

Deborah Bull

On March 17th, on a bright, clear day, an intrepid group set off for the Barby shooting range for an hour of air rifle shooting. We were shown to the undercover range and introduced to our rifles.

They were surprisingly heavy and very good quality rifles with excellent sights.

We had plenty of instruction on how to hold the rifle, to reload the pellets and of course how to operate and shoot the rifle. It was a little complicated, especially for those who hadn't done it before! It was a steep learning curve!

The pellets were tiny and fiddly to put into the loading cartridge, so there was a lot of quiet concentration and calls for assistance until we got used to it! Once we felt a little more confident, we were off shooting at the targets.

There was plenty to aim for, including a giant metal deer with various-sized targets on the side of it and lots of spinning targets in the shape of various creatures. The targets all reset automatically and made sounds to tell us we had managed to hit the target!!

At the end of the session, we were given our own paper target to shoot at to see who could get nearest to the bullseye. We all did very well. It was a thoroughly enjoyable session, and we all had a lot of fun!



## Fitness Matters!

You need to stay fit as you get older.

Take my dad, he started walking on his birthday in December.

The trouble is, we now have no idea where he's gone!?



## Bird Watching Group..... Richard Piner



For our April outing, we visited Pitsford Reservoir to see birds being caught and having a ring put on one leg. This is to help monitor the bird's activity and movement if it is caught again.

The process of attaching a ring does not harm the bird, and it is happy to fly off once this has been completed. The bird is also weighed, wings measured and aged as far as possible.



We saw all this carried out and explained by a local ringer. We saw some reed buntings, a great tit and a mallard being processed. The rings used are very light and don't affect the birds in any way.



### Who Said That... The Answers.

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Bob Monkhouse        | The Golden Shot       |
| 2. Lance Corporal Jones | Dad's Army            |
| 3. Victor Meldrew       | One Foot In The Grave |
| 4. Mr Humphries         | Are You Being Served  |
| 5. Bruce Forsyth        | The Generation Game   |
| 6. Harold Steptoe       | Steptoe & Sons        |
| 7. Alf Garnett          | Til Death Us Do Part  |
| 8. Del Boy              | Only Fools & Horses   |
| 9. Baldrick             | Black Adder           |
| 10. Captain Mainwaring  | Dad's Army            |



## Daventry & District u3a Activity & Interest Groups

**Free for members to join**  
(Although some activities may have associated costs).

Our groups are the lifeblood of the u3a so, why not consider joining or forming a group to further your interest and meet like-minded members.

Frequency Key: M = Monthly F = Fortnightly W = Weekly	Frequency	Day	Time	Frequency Key: M = Monthly F = Fortnightly W = Weekly	Frequency	Day	Time
Acoustics	To Be Advised			Philosophy	M	Tue	AM
Alternative Book Group	M	Thurs	AM	Photography For Pleasure	M	Tue	PM
Any Crafts Will Do	F	Mon	PM	Rambles (4-6 Miles)	M	Mon	AM
Art Appreciation	M	Tue	PM	Reading Shakespeare 1	M	Fri	AM
BakeXChange	M	Fri	PM	Reading Shakespeare 2	M	Mon	PM
Bird Watching / Nature	M	Thurs	AM/PM	Rummikub 1	M	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	PM
Book Group	M	Tue	PM	Rummikub 2	M	Wed	Eve
Bridge	M	Thurs	PM	Rummikub 3	M	Tue	PM
Climate Change	M	Thurs	PM	Rummikub 4	M	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	PM
Creative Writing	M	Wed	AM	Scrabble	M	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon	PM
Cribbage	F	Fri	PM	Spanish Conversation	F	Mon	AM
Folk Dancing	W	Thurs	AM	Spanish Conversation (Basic)	F	Wed	PM
French Conversation 1	F	Wed	PM	Supper Club	M	Wed	Eve
Garden Vistas & Views	M	Fri	Day	The Art Of Painting	F	Wed	PM
Golf	M	Fri	AM	The Stories In My Life	M	Thurs	PM
History I	M	4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	PM	Virtual Book Group	M	Tue	Day
History II	M	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	PM	Weekenders	M	Sat/Sun	AM/PM
Moto	Meet On Various Days			Wine Appreciation	Bi-Monthly Various		PM
Motoring	M	Tue	AM				
New Experiences	Activity Dependent						

**No group is ever 'FULL', there may be a waiting list until there is room, or another group is started.**

To find out more information about a particular group go to <http://www.daventryanddistrict.u3asite.uk/groups>

To contact the editor of the monthly newsletter with all your comments, news and photos:

[daventryu3a.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:daventryu3a.newsletter@gmail.com)

**Make a Note - put it in your Contacts List**