



Items for the newsletter should be emailed to  
[newsletter@eastwoodu3a.org](mailto:newsletter@eastwoodu3a.org)



**Deadline for January 2024 newsletter - Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December**

## MONTHLY MEETING

**6th December**

**Graham Short- Speaker**

### My Life as a Micro-Artist

Living and working in Birmingham, Graham Short is a world renowned micro-artist producing miniature pieces of art. His many achievements include: engraving The Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin; engraving the words "Nothing is impossible" on the edge of a Wilkinson Sword razor blade and engraving a miniscule portrait of the Queen on a speck of gold inserted into the eye of a needle.



*Roger Kidd - Speaker Finder*

## VOLUNTEERS

**Setting Up:** Barbara Andrews, Rob Leam.

**Refreshments:** Sue Whittamore, Linda Lambert, Georgia Hanson, Karen Rea.

**Signing In:** Margaret Naylor, Barbara Andrews.

**Meet and Greet:** Ann McGillivray, Pat Collins.

Many thanks to our volunteers. It would be really helpful if you could arrive between 9.00 and 9.15 am.

*Doris Fellows, Volunteer Coordinator*

## REFRESHMENTS

Our first session without plastic cups went well. Thanks to those who donated mugs, which have now joined the church stock, and those who brought their own mugs and took them away to wash. A small number brought their own re-usable cups, and hopefully that number will increase. Many thanks to Linda Lambert and her trusty team, who work so tirelessly each month so that we can enjoy a hot drink and chat. Let's continue this positive approach so that we cut down on the use of mugs that need washing by the team, and the use of "recyclable" cups. Also a reminder that donation bowls are available next to the drinks so that we can reduce the costs of providing refreshments.



At the December meeting, refreshments will follow the speaker, and there will be a variety of delicious seasonal treats available.

*Janet Lander*

## RESERVED SEATS AT THE MONTHLY MEETING

At the monthly meetings, there will be reserved signs on some of the front seats, so that it will be easier for any who are especially hard of hearing, or have eyesight issues, to enjoy the speaker. Please feel free to sit on one of these seats if it would be of benefit to you.

*Janet Lander*



**Save the date:**  
**18 - 20 July 2024**

Plans are already underway for **u3a Festival '24** which will take place in July 2024 in the beautiful city of York.

The festival will run over 3 days and will be held at the **University of York** based around their exhibition centre and sports centre.

There will be a wide variety of activities - talks, sporting events, musical entertainment and workshops which will make this first u3a national festival something to remember.

Tickets are not yet available to buy but the cost of attending the festival will be as follows:

- **Day 1**, Thursday 18 July - **£25** including buffet supper
- **Day 2**, Friday 19 July - **£10** for the full day
- **Day 3**, Saturday 20 July - **£5** for a half day
- **Full festival** to include all 3 days and a buffet supper on Day 1 - **£35**

**Accommodation** will be available on campus & a list of local self-catering, B&B, campsites and hotels is being collated.

A link for more information is available on [Eastwood & District website](#).

Membership Secretary [membership@eastwoodu3a.org](mailto:membership@eastwoodu3a.org) Tel 07565 928 992

Executive Committee Members: [eastwoodu3a@gmail.com](mailto:eastwoodu3a@gmail.com)

Website: [www.eastwoodu3a.org](http://www.eastwoodu3a.org)

### THIRD AGE MATTERS

Some of our members have reported that they are still receiving the U3A magazine, Third Age Matters, and no longer require it. The best time to cancel it is when you renew your membership, and there is a box to tick for that. It is easier for us to cancel this at a specific time of year, and there may be a slight delay as it is processed. It is easy to miss the relevant box, and order it by mistake.

However, other members really enjoy reading the magazine and one of our group told us that they had found vouchers that had given them a substantial discount on a holiday. So, if one of you enjoys a particular article and wants to let us know, please let one of the committee know, or send your ideas to be included in the newsletter. It would be good to have a regular slot. We might also be able to organise a scheme where members bring in past copies for others to read.

*Janet Lander*

### CREATIVE CRAFTS

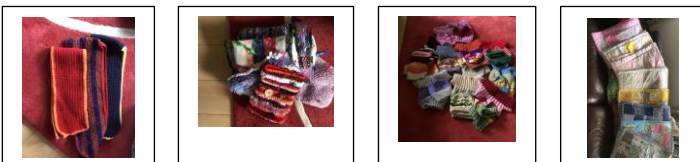
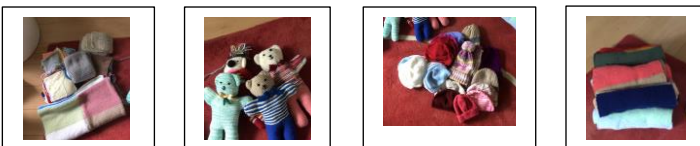
#### KnitAid for Ukraine

The group have been very industrious over the last couple of months and all of the following have been forwarded on to PUMA (Plymouth Ukraine Medical Aid) and will be taken over to Ukraine on the Christmas run. PUMA hand deliver aid into the Ukraine. They give it to those who need it the most, on the front line, orphanages, shelters, hospitals, etc.

They have recently put out a plea for crocheted/knitted items from babies/children clothes to hats, scarves, gloves, socks for adults. There is currently a granny square challenge to make as many blankets as possible. This is what we've sent this month:

Several granny squares to sew into blankets, a blanket, 3 teddies, a worry monster, 24 hats, 7 large scarves/lap blankets, 3 small thick scarves, 5 twiddle muffs, a twiddle lap blanket, 12 fish and chip vests, 10 matching hats and 8 cot quilts (sewn).

*Margaret Naylor*



### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

**Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed to this month's bumper newsletter. New members particularly benefit from seeing what goes on in our wonderful groups. Please send your contributions for next month to:**

***newsletter@eastwoodu3a.org***

## u3a

Calling all members!

### u3a Poetry Competition 2023/24 is now open

The deadline for submission is **12pm on Friday 26 January 2024**. Look on the website for further information:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/poetry-competition>

**This competition is open to all u3a members**, not just those in writing groups. You can only apply online so it is very important to follow the instructions carefully.

Best of luck to everyone.

### POETRY

#### THE ROOF'S OFF

Flashes wake us to our fate.  
Looming skies foretell of danger.  
Shouts and cries from fearful neighbours:  
now our world's a brutal stranger.  
Frightening thuds from toppling towers:  
trees and roofs caught in the blasts.  
How we cower to save our lives,  
our fright and terror now so vast.  
All around it gains momentum.  
Near and far the clamour tells  
of devastation unimagined,  
the aftermath straight out of hell.  
Moving, circling. Squalls and flurries  
shocked our known world, brought us fear.  
Morning brings us woeful damage.  
Global warming storms are here.

*Pat Potter Mar.'22*

### NATIONAL TRUST

On behalf of the National Trust Group, we would like to thank **Yvonne** for her hard work and the time she takes to organise the trips to these amazing places.

We would like her to know how much we appreciate her and how much we all look forward to our next trip.

**Thank you Yvonne**

*From The National Trust Group*

### WANTED

We are looking for someone who usually uses Zoom to attend the monthly meetings and who would be willing to act as a Zoom Controller, admitting those who are using the link. Training provided if necessary.

### NEWSLETTER POSTAL CHARGE

Members who are not on the internet and would like the newsletter posted to them can do this by paying £10 on top of their annual subscription. This is less than the true cost but it reflects a commitment to receiving it.

## FORGOTTEN HISTORICAL CHRISTMAS DISHES

### Mince Pies with Real Meat 1200's

Today's mince pies are eaten throughout Europe and America and are made with a selection of raisins, apricots, cinnamon, nutmeg and nuts. They come from the traditional Roman festival of Saturnalia, in which sweet meat dishes were presented to the Roman fathers of the Vatican.

There is also a link to the Crusaders returning from the Middle East with tales of dishes containing meats with fruits and spices. Throughout time the meat has been phased out of most modern mince pie production

### Frumenty 1300's

This dish dates back to medieval times and includes ingredients such as almonds, currants, milk, eggs and often fish and meat

Its main ingredient is cracked wheat. Take 1 cup of cracked wheat and add it to pre-boiled well water. It is then covered until all the water is absorbed and the wheat is tender. Eggs and milk are then added. It is said to be the pre-cursor of plum pudding or the Christmas pudding we all love today

### A Yorkshire Pie 1700's

The recipe was first published in 1747 in a book by Hannah Glasse called 'The Art of Cookery' and is probably the world's meatiest pie.

The cook must skin and bone a goose, a turkey, a fowl, a partridge and a pigeon and season each with mace, nutmeg, cloves, black pepper and salt. The birds are then placed inside one another in order of size and four pounds of butter must be added before laying over a very thick pie lid [which was not meant to be eaten] and baked in a very hot oven for at least 4 hours



Patricia Potter

## 5 MILE WALK - NOVEMBER



## HISTORY OF ENGLAND - A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

A Victorian Christmas is a time-honoured tradition that harks back to the 19th century during the reign of Queen Victoria in the UK. This period is often associated with the popularisation of many Christmas customs and traditions that we still enjoy today. A Victorian Christmas was marked by a unique blend of religious observance, family celebrations, and cultural influences.

**Christmas Decorations:** The Victorians were instrumental in popularising many Christmas decorations such as the Christmas tree. Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's German-born husband, introduced the Christmas tree to England in the 1840s. People would decorate trees with candles, fruits and homemade decorations.

**Christmas Cards:** The first Christmas card was sent in 1843 by Sir Henry Cole, a Victorian civil servant. Sending Christmas cards became popular during this era, featuring festive scenes, winter landscapes, and holiday greetings.

**Feasting:** A sumptuous Christmas feast was a central part of the Victorian celebration. The Christmas dinner often featured a roasted goose, turkey, or a Christmas pudding. Many of the traditional British Christmas foods we know today have their origins in the Victorian era.

**Carolling:** Carolling was a popular activity during Victorian Christmases. Groups of carollers visited homes, singing festive songs like "Deck the Halls" and "Silent Night." Carolling was a way to spread holiday cheer and often involved receiving treats or small gifts in return.

**Gift-Giving:** The Victorian era saw the rise of the modern practice of exchanging gifts on Christmas Day. Giving and receiving presents became a central part of the holiday, reflecting the spirit of generosity and love. Many gifts were handmade and cherished for their sentimental value.

**Charity:** The Victorians emphasized the importance of charity during the Christmas season. Many charitable organisations and individuals took the opportunity to help those less fortunate by providing food, clothing and support to those in need.

**Parlour Games:** After the Christmas meal, Victorian families often engaged in parlour games and activities, promoting laughter and bonding. Games like charades, snapdragon and blind man's bluff were common pastimes.

**Church Services:** Religious observance played a significant role in Victorian Christmas celebrations. Attending Christmas church services, such as Midnight Mass or carol services, was a traditional way to mark the holiday's religious significance.

**Christmas Decor:** Homes were decorated with greenery like holly, ivy and mistletoe. These natural elements, along with candles and garlands, added a festive touch to the Victorian household.

**Family Togetherness:** A Victorian Christmas was primarily a family-centred celebration. Family members gathered to share the joy of the season, exchange gifts and create lasting memories.

The Victorian era had a profound and lasting influence on the way Christmas is celebrated in the Western world. Many customs and traditions established during this period continue to be an integral part of a modern Christmas, emphasizing the importance of family, charity and giving.

Margaret Naylor (using AI)

## ART APPRECIATION

**James Tissot**

For their October meeting the Art Appreciation Group enjoyed a presentation about this 19<sup>th</sup> century artist.

Tissot was a friend of Manet and Degas who are widely known as part of the Impressionist group of artists, and yet Tissot is not widely known today, despite being one of the most financially successful artists in his lifetime. He led an interesting and exceptionally wide-ranging life which is hard to summarise in a short article.

Jaques Joseph Tissot was born in Nantes on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1836 into a prosperous catholic family. At age 17, with his mother's encouragement, he went to Paris to study art. He was an excellent draughtsman and technician but found academia tedious and was more influenced by his artist friends. He adopted an anglicised version of his name.

**1858-1864**

Most of his works were in the medieval style, many based on scenes from Faust.

**1865-1871**

He started successfully painting in a narrative style reflecting the Victorian era.

**1870-1871**

He was involved in the defence of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War. The art world in Paris was in ruins so he fled to London where he had friends.

**1872-1877**

He was a hugely successful painter of society, although not liked by the art critics and regarded as vulgar by some.

**1877-1882**

He met and fell in love with Mrs Kathleen Newton. She featured in many of his portraits during this period, until her death from TB in 1882. One of Tissot's portraits of Kathleen was the last artwork Freddie Mercury bought, only 4 weeks before he died. This painting was auctioned with other belongings of Freddie's at Sotheby's in September 2023.

**1882**

Tissot returned to Paris and painted a series "Women of Paris."

**1890-94**

Following a vision while visiting a church in Paris, Tissot made many trips to the Middle East and embarked on a project to illustrate the New Testament. These 350 watercolours were received with great enthusiasm and now lodge in the Brooklyn Museum.

**1896-1902**

Tissot began a project to illustrate the Hebrew Bible. He died before this was finished but students in his studio finished the project. 368 works in their original frames now belong to the Jewish Museum.

This article has only scratched the surface of Tissot's life, but I hope it encourages you to explore further.

*Audrey Measures*



Portrait of Kathleen Newton – bought by Freddie Mercury



Journey of the Magi

The earliest Carol singers can be found on the Bayeux tapestry...and were soldiers from Western France...they were known as the Brittany Spears



## GROUP INFORMATION

If you have ideas for new groups or need further information contact:

[groups.coordinator@eastwoodu3a.org](mailto:groups.coordinator@eastwoodu3a.org)

**Art Appreciation:** meet in Brinsley Parish Hall, 3rd Monday @ 10:30 am. Contact Helen 01773 710 743

**Bird Watching and Wildlife:** meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 10.30 am. Contact Paul 07986 037 871

**Board Games:** meet in the Hayloft, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday @ 1.30 pm. Contact Pauline Dawkins 01159 383 530

**Book Group:** meet 1<sup>st</sup> Monday @ 11.00 am in Eastwood Library. Contact Sue 01773 717676 or Pauline 01773 788366

**Café Culture** meet in various venues on the 2nd Wednesday at 10.30 a.m. **New members welcome!** Contact Margaret 07828 155 086

**Canasta:** meet in the Hayloft, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday @ 11.00 am. Contact Nina 01773 717 770

**Church History:** Contact Marianne 01159 134 077

**Coffee & Co:** meet in various venues on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday @ 11.00 am. Contact Barbara 01159 468 721

**Coffee Mates:** members have a choice of dates each month. Contact Andrea 07927 660 408

**Creative Crafts:** meet in Rumbletums 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 1-2.30 pm and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 10.00 – 12.00 noon. **New Members welcome!** Contact Jackie 07580 340 014

**Creative Writing: New members welcome!** Contact Chris 07891 032 300

**Family History:** meet in the Hayloft on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 11.00 – 12.30 pm. Contact Diana 0115 9 169 343

**French Conversation:** meet in the Hayloft on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 10.00 am. **New members welcome!** Contact Pauline 01773 788 366

**Gogglebox:** meet in the Hayloft on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 11.00 – 12.30 pm. **New members welcome!** Contact Janet 07889 976 342

## GROUP INFORMATION

**History of England:** meet in the Hayloft, 1st Thursday @ 10.00 am. Contact Janet 01773 770 183

**National Trust:** meet in the Dog & Parrot on 1<sup>st</sup> Monday each month @ 10.00 am. Contact Yvonne 01773 712 530

**Pétanque:** Contact Colin 01773 715 493

**Photography:** meet in Brinsley Parish Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday @ 10.00 am. **New members, beginners & enthusiasts all welcome.** Contact Barbara 01773 786 004 or 07977109451

**Psychology:** meet in Rumbletums on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday @ 1.00 pm. Contact Jim 07977 415 072 or Diana 01159 169 343

**Pub Pals:** Contact Janet 07961 832 864 or Rob 07845 177 500

**Social Trips:** Day trips out to various locations. Contact Sandra tel. 07930 752 808

**Spanish:** meet on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday 11.00 - 12.30 pm @ Julie's Tea Rooms. **New members welcome!** Contact Paul 01159 133 449

**Strollers:** This group has now finished for the Winter and will recommence in the Spring.

**Theatre Group:** meet in Dora Phillips Hall, Eastwood on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 1.00 – 3.00 pm. Contact Marianne 01773 717 500  
**TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

**Walks, 5 miles:** meet on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 10 am at Beauvale Priory. Contact Roger Reynolds for further information 01773 788169/07879492779

**War Babies & Boomers:** Contact Ann [warbabies@eastwoodu3a.org](mailto:warbabies@eastwoodu3a.org)

**Whist:** meet at the Hayloft, Giltbrook on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 2.00 pm. Contact Glenis 01773 715 040

**Wine Appreciation:** meet in the Hayloft on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday @ 7.00 pm. Contact Chris 07779 375865

## GROUPS COORDINATORS

Anne's Groups	Madeleine's Groups	Marianne's Groups
1. Board Games	1. Art Appreciation	1. Bird Watching
2. Coffee Mates	2. Cafe Culture	2. Book Group
3. Creative Crafts	3. Church History	3. Canasta
4. History of England	4. Coffee & Co	4. Gogglebox
5. Pub Pals	5. Creative Writing	5. Pétanque
6. National Trust	6. Family History	6. Photography
7. General Gardening	7. French Conversation	7. Social Trips
8. War Babies and Boomers	8. Psychology	8. Theatre
9. Technology Group	9. Spanish	9. 5ml Walks
		10. Wine Appreciation
		11. Whist

★ Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year ★