

November 2024 Issue No 103

Musings from the Chair



Here we are again. It is the *season of mists and mellow fruitfulness*, one of the few quotes I remember from my A level English days. The week has been good though, so hopefully all the children on half term holidays, and all of us grandparents who are looking after them, have managed to get out and about a bit.

Once again it was very pleasing to see so many of you at the monthly meeting - over 100 in person and 9 joining us on Zoom. It made me think I need to visit Green's windmill again - it is a good number of years since I have been there. We had 7 new members join at the meeting. A big welcome to one and all. That nicely leads me on to the next point I want to highlight....

With numbers increasing steadily, there is pressure on some of our interest groups where numbers are limited, either by the room it is held in, or by virtue of the type of activity it is. A lot of us, me included, are down as a member of groups which we seldom (or sometimes never) get to. Maybe circumstances have changed, or having tried out a group you have discovered it is not for you. If this is the case, please let the convener know so that your place can be offered to someone else who may have been waiting a while. I understand that the Art Appreciation group which is full with a waiting list ask individuals if they will be missing even for one meeting, so that if they are someone else can be invited to the group for that 1 session. That seems to me to be an excellent idea and allows people to try out a group before taking up a place. It goes without saying that the conveners find it very helpful for planning purposes if members can advise whether or not they are going to a meeting, and I do know that some members never contact the conveners at all - mind you, they are probably not reading this plea either!

Please inform the convener if you no longer wish to be listed as a member of a group

New members, if you have an interest in an existing group please contact the convener either in person at the monthly meeting or use the appropriate generic email (eg tabletennis@madu3a.org) so that the convener can invite you to a group if they have space, or put you onto their waiting list or answer any enquiries you have.

My next plea is for help with teas and coffees at general meetings. Anna Harper has been in charge of our refreshments for 3 years and wants someone to take over. We are very grateful to Anna for having done a marvellous job. The successful applicant needs to bring the milk and biscuits and table cloths each month - cost is reimbursed - and then, with others, make and serve the teas and coffees. Once again I'm afraid the salary is non existent, but you will have everyone's grateful thanks. Anna is here for November and so can help with a handover but is not here for December. I am hopeful that with 350 members someone will offer so that we can continue having a drink at our meetings.

So have a great month everyone, whatever you are doing and enjoy your membership of our lovely u3a

Val Wilkinson
Chair

Save the Date :
General Meeting
Thursday 28 November at 10:00am

Jump to :
[What's on at the Lace Market Theatre](#)
[What's on at the Playhouse](#)
[Trips and Visits](#)

NOTICES

Walking Groups

The Walking group had an excellent, if a little muddy, walk on 18 October led by Georgina. Eight of us met just off the Hucknall by-pass and walked from Dob Park, up Misk Hills, over the motorway and back over Beacon Hill. The area was one I wasn't familiar with but it is a walk I'll do again, particularly as there are spectacular views which were obscured last week by mist.

The Walking group meets on the third Friday morning provided there is a volunteer to lead a walk. **We are looking for volunteers for 2025.** The walks should be between 5 and 8 miles. Most are in Nottinghamshire and reasonably local but there is no reason we can not go a little further afield if members are prepared to travel and shared lifts can be arranged.

Our next walk should be on 15 November. Is there anyone who could offer to lead a walk that is likely to be suitable for Autumn and not excessively muddy?

We have no walk planned for December, but have a planned walk in January around Attenborough, to be led by Cath. If you would like to join us please email walking@madu3a.org. If you think you could lead a walk I would be delighted to hear from you.

The walks which were formerly called 'Short Walks' on the 2nd Friday of each month are now renamed 'A walk in the Park'. This is not to say that it is just an amble. The parks are the country parks in the main - Gedling, Colwick, Bestwood, Rushcliffe etc. These walks are a little shorter - around 3 miles. Again volunteers to lead walks are really appreciated. Many of our parks have different possible routes to enjoy. For that group please email walkinthepark@madu3a.org.

Our final walking group is our 'Strollers' group. They meet on the first Friday. These walks are perhaps only a mile or so and are for those who want to get out and enjoy a walk with others, but only want a short stroll. The contact for this group is strollers@madu3a.org.

Dogs are allowed on all our walks, provided they are well behaved and on leads where necessary.

I am aware that some members would prefer walks without dogs. We would be happy to help someone who wanted to set up and convene a walking group for those with 2 legs only, but it needs volunteers as the existing conveners have dogs to walk. If you think this is something you could take on, please let me know.

Val Wilkinson

Blister Packs

Once again, we are encountering problems with recycling blister packs. Unfortunately, we need to cease collections immediately. I will let you know if and when we find another route to recycle. I can only apologise and live in hope of finding a reliable way of doing this.

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Debunk Bot

We have had so much info on scams, we can safely say we are more aware of the risks we face. But what about conspiracy theories? How can we know truth from falsehood?

Over the pond an election is being run on misleading stuff and it may well have damaging effects on both individuals and society as a whole. Well there may be some help from AI (Artificial Intelligence). One application is called Debunk Bot.

This app will enter into a conversation which gives me the opportunity to explain my belief that more people die from donkeys falling on them than in airline accidents. The Bot will confirm my certainty that I am right and then give me something to chew on. What could possibly go wrong? AI may not be neutral but it is patient so it might be a useful tool.

Find out more by listening to the BBC R4 programme [The Artificial Human](#).

Martin Cooke

Tour of the Council House

On 1 October about 30 members had a tour of the Council House. We were split into two groups, one started on the ground floor and the other on the third floor.

The Council House is a Grade II listed building designed by local architect Cecil Howitt - he also designed buildings all over the country including Birmingham, Bristol and Newport. There was a conscious decision during its construction that every workman must be from Nottingham. This was a way of giving employment to locals during a time of high unemployment.

The Council House was built in the Neo-Baroque style between 1927-29 to replace the Nottingham Exchange which was in a state of disrepair. The cost of the building was over £502,000 (over £38m today). There was no cost to the local population as it was borne by a mortgage from all the shops in the Arcade. This mortgage was finally paid off in 1981. It was officially opened by The Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII and Duke of Windsor) on 22 May 1929. The key used to open the door is on display at the rear of reception.

Cecil Howitt used many influences and expertise in the building, including visiting Milan to get ideas for the shopping arcade. He also used the same Portland Stone utilised in St Paul's Cathedral - he persuaded the quarry which provided this stone to reopen especially for the purpose.

As we entered the reception area we were met by 'Welcome' a female bronze with arms outstretched. It is based on the wife of its donor (Sir Julien Cahn) and was unveiled on 10 February 1931. There are many statues, drawings, paintings and murals throughout the building - including over 100 pencil sketches



done over several years by T Hammond portraying different areas of Nottingham. The majority of statues in the building were by Joseph Else (Principal of the Nottingham School of Art) and his students. The pub outside the Council House is named after him. There is also a larger than life bust of Ghandi presented by the Hindu community.

In the shopping arcade (part of the Council House) are four murals depicting - Danes capturing Nottingham in 868; William the Conqueror ordering the building of the Castle in 1068; Robin Hood and



View to the Arcade

Also throughout the building are display cabinets full of regalia, regimental items, gifts and other donations by visiting dignitaries from all over the world. Included in the regalia are the two Sheriff's maces. Originally, the city had two Sheriffs - one representing the Norman part of the city and the other the Anglo-Saxon. The Sheriff's Officer carried both maces on ceremonial occasions.

The Ballroom on the first floor (which we managed to sneak into as it was being used for Citizenship ceremonies) has a sprung floor - ideal for tea dances which are held there. We were not allowed onto the famous balcony due to Health and Safety concerns (the rail being below the current safely limit). The Ballroom is said to be based on the Palace of Versailles, with mirrors along the wall. On the second floor we could look into the Ballroom without being seen from below.

his Merry Men and Charles I raising his standard at the start of the Civil War in 1642.

All the models were local people.

The Council Chamber takes up most of the third floor and its seats are arranged in a semi-circle so no-one is more than 26 feet away from the Lord Mayor. It is now used mostly as a Coroner's Court. The walls are insulated with dried seaweed and covered with tapestries to ensure that debates could be heard before the installation of microphones.

Members of the public could listen to meetings from the balcony on the left hand side (as you faced the Lord Mayor) and the press from the right hand side.



The Lord Mayor and Sheriff each have their own parlours and members their own lounge and tea room. The Sheriff's parlour was originally allocated to the Lady Mayoress.

There is a very strong connection with all branches of the armed forces - Nottingham was, and is, a strong recruiting ground for all branches.

To celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1879, Nottingham was one of several towns to become cities.

In 2010 council business and meetings were moved to Loxley House and the Council House houses, as well as Coroner's Court, the registration of births, marriages and deaths department. Many of the rooms are now available to hire for weddings, meetings, dances and exhibitions. Tours for groups, large or small, can be arranged by contacting the Civic Office.

Sheila Ward

Using AI

Last month I sat in on a zoom session organised by [u3a Communities](#). If you want to know more about AI you could do worse than follow the u3a sessions online.

You have probably heard of civil engineering, mechanical engineering and reverse engineering, but what are **value** engineering and **prompt** engineering?

- **Value** engineering is how the supermarkets make you think you have a substantial meal and it turns out to be less than substantial because they hide the size.
- **Prompt** engineering is the process of structuring an instruction that can be interpreted and understood by a generative AI model. In other words, having a conversation so you can explain what exactly it is you are looking for.

So my idea is to use AI when shopping so you can see when the supermarket is pulling a fast one. In order to do this you will need to teach the AI app. As time goes by the app will learn more and more. Better prompt engineering skills will enable you to ask the right questions.

What can AI be used for?

Both information and creativity. Like Google search, AI searches the whole internet, but in addition will enter into a conversation.

There are many areas of increasingly powerful uses:

memory, language learning, medical data, image-making, aids for sight impairment, role-play, writing verse and lyrics, making images, computer programming, writing articles and essays, grief ,tech, generating quizzes, telling jokes, having a conversation, making rude noises, evaluating CVs, planning, analysing energy bills, making videos ...

Alan Freeland's beginners course includes :

- Getting Started with AI
- Beginner's guide to using Generative AI
- Beginners Guide to using ChatGPT
- Run an 'Understanding and using AI' course: The Silver AI Project

Six one hour session AI course with documents - [The Silver AI Project](#).

Martin Cooke

POETRY CORNER

Thoughts on Dementia ...

Blessed are they who understand
My faltering step and shaking hand.
Blessed are they who know my ears today
Must strain to hear the things they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know
My eyes are dim and my answers slow.
Blessed are they who look away
When my tea was spilled at the table today.
Blessed are they who with a cheery smile
Will stop to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say
"You've told that story twice today."
Blessed are they who know my ways
And bring back memories of yesterdays.
Blessed are they who ease the days
And care for me in loving ways.
Blessed are they who make it known
I'm loved, respected and not alone

Found on the net by Marian Donaldson

A Poem about Old Age ...

Old age is golden, I've often heard it said
But sometimes I wonder as I crawl into bed.
With my ears in my drawer, my teeth in a cup,
And my eyes on a shelf until I wake up.
Ere sleep dims my eyes, I say to myself,
Is there anything else I should put on that shelf?

The reason I know my youth has been spent
Is my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!
But, I really don't mind as I think with a grin
Of all the fun places my get-up has been!

Found on the net by Elaine Khan

Midnight at Hangman's Oak

Vic Blake

Part One

1.
Down the hill at dead of night,
A full moon on the rise,
Thirteen women made their way
Unseen by prying eyes,
Unheard by those who slept nearby,
Tucked up in their beds;
Hear no evil, see no evil,
Rest those weary heads!

2.
Silently they made their way
Without a single sound.
With singular intention,
Their wicked way they wound,
Down the long and winding hill,
And past the steamy byres,
Past the cosy cottages,
Soft embers in their fires.

3.
Out across the foxy fields
And down the stony loke,
Still no sound beneath their feet
Still not a word they spoke,
To the dark and dismal wood,
The witching hour so near,
This last night of October,
The wildest of the year.

4.
Deep into the pitch black wood,
As black as black could be,
No silver moon could penetrate
Through those towering trees.
Yet they knew their wicked way,
No need had they to see,
And the owl that watched them
Thought it best to let them be.

5.
Deeper still into the woods
In single file they went,
Further, darker, driven on
By dastardly intent,
Till they reached a clearing where
The moon at last awoke,
And lit up like a monster
That cursed Hangman's Oak.

6.
A giant tree, tall and strong,
Full fifty feet or more,
Lording over all that lived
Upon that forest floor.
A trunk so vast, limbs so wide,
It seemed to scratch the sky,
A sight to make young Alice White
Hang her head and cry.

7.
For Alice had a lover,
So tall and fair was he,
Loved him more than life itself,
And wedded they would be.
But for the hunting of a deer,
Hungry mouths to feed,
They hung him from that oak,
And left her poor heart to bleed.

8.
One woman either side of her
Gave her hand a squeeze,
As all stepped slowly forward
Towards that cursed tree.
Soft as dew their footsteps fell,
Their chanting they began,
Rhythmically, determinedly,
They led her by the hand.

9.
Round its trunk they all joined
hands,
Then to the mystic dance,
Skip and step and skip and step,
So rhythmical their chants,
Ancient words that pierced the
night,
Words of mystic malice
For the ones who killed the love
Of their young sister Alice.

10.
As they danced around that tree,
As all as one they sang,
They cursed the great injustice
Of one so cruelly hanged.
Their wailing and their chanting,
The vengeful words they spoke,

The wild things of the woodland
From their silent slumbers woke.

11.
Thirteen vengeful verses long,
Their anger wild and free,
Thirteen curses, gobs and kicks
They rained upon that tree,
Till at last they all stepped back,
With loud, blood-curdling hoots,
And, as one, hitched up their skirts
And pissed upon its roots.

12.
Their dreadful spell now being
complete,
One by one they stood,
Then slowly backwards, seeking
The shelter of the wood.
Where they waited, where they
watched,
As high above their heads
A cloud as black as hell itself,
Filled the air with dread.

13.
Now the woods began to stir,
The ground itself to quake,
As the limbs of that great oak
A violent wind did shake,
Then one great clap of thunder
Like no man ever knew,
And one great flash of lightning
Split that great oak clean in two.

Part Two

14.
High upon a grassy hill
A splendid house did stand,
A fine and spacious mansion
In a wide swathe of land,
Where, abed, a certain judge
Who stole a young man's life,
Overfed, lay fast asleep
Beside his crabbit wife.

15.
In dreams of boundless power
And wealth beyond compare,
Of sweet and nubile maidens,
Entwined around him there,
So enamoured in his sleep,
His back turned to his wife,
Could not foresee the passing of
His cruel, worthless life.

16.
By neither crack of thunder
Nor by that oak's demise,
Both were rudely woken
By the screams and by the cries
Of panic-stricken servants,
With terror in their eyes,
Fleeing the inferno
Of a fireball from the skies.

17.
All was now a funeral pyre,
A furnace, so intense,
Flames so high, so fierce and bright,
The smoke so black and dense,
Till, like a midnight sunrise,
Its fiery orange glow,
Lit up the dark hillsides
To the forest far below.

18.
There, thirteen faces looked on
In silence and in awe,
As fire lit up the whole sky
Down to the leafy floor.
Then, once the fire subsided,
Conceding to the dark,
Suddenly, the whole collapsed
In one huge burst of sparks.

19.
Still no words they uttered,
As they turned upon the spot
And headed back whence they
came,
Contented with their lot.
Along the way a thousand eyes
Watched them as they went,
Natural justice meted out,
Their energies well-spent.

20.
Once they reached the village green,
Each went their separate ways,
All still asleep, long before
The breaking of the day,
Back to sleeping husbands
Dreaming quietly through the night,
To warm beds and sweet lovers....
All save young Alice White.

Thanks to our member Vic Blake for sharing his poem with us

INTEREST GROUPS

Click on the group name to visit our MaD website for more information :

[Ale & Cider Group](#)

[Art Appreciation](#)

[Badminton Group](#)

[Book Group 1](#)

[Book Group 2](#)

[Breakfast Club](#)

[Bridge for Beginners](#)

[CineMates](#)

[Creative Craft](#)

[Creative Writing](#)

[Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners](#)

[Cryptic Crosswords for Improvers](#)

[Curry Club](#)

[Family History](#)

[French Conversation and Culture](#)

[French for Fun](#)

[Fun Cooking with Gadgets](#)

[Games Group](#)

[Gardening Group](#)

[German Conversation & Culture](#)

[Italian Speech](#)

[Knit and Natter](#)

[Literature](#)

[Local and Live Music](#)

[Local History](#)

[Lunch Club](#)

[MaD Girls](#)

[MaD Men](#)

[MaDAmDrammers](#)

[Music Appreciation](#)

[National Trust Group](#)

[New & Prospective Members](#)

[Outdoor Activities](#)

[Photography](#)

[Play Going - Lace Market Theatre](#)

[Play Going - Playhouse](#)

[Play Reading Group](#)

[Project Craft Group](#)

[Singing Together](#)

[Table Tennis](#)

[The Bryan Ruskin MaD Jazzers](#)

[Trips and Visits](#)

[Ukulele Group](#)

[Walking - Walk in the Park](#)

[Walking - Strollers](#)

[Wine Appreciation](#)

[Wine Bar](#)

Could you help to run an interest group?

Is there a group you would like to start?

If you have a skill or knowledge about a subject you would like to share with others why not consider starting an interest group? There is lots of help and advice to get you started and help with the technical side of things as well. Conveners find running a group is very enjoyable and rewarding.

If you think you'd like to have a go don't be shy - please send an email to our Groups Support on coordinator@madu3a.org or have a chat with any Committee member so we can help you to get going.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

German Conversation & Culture

We had a very enjoyable meeting on 15 October. Joy received an email from Dina; her operation has been successful and she is continuing her recovery. She hopes to join us again in the New Year.

We read, translated and discussed two articles from Nachrichten Leicht. The first, carried over from our last meeting, was about Oasis. Their differences now resolved a "come back" tour is planned for 2025. The second article about the world famous October Fest which takes place in Munich every year, was especially enjoyable. It was interesting to read about the origins of the festival which began in 1810.

Pat & Joy had been to a local German food and drink festival at the Woodlark which, although very good, was nowhere near the grand scale of the Munich festival.

Our "study" verb this month was HELFEN. Everyone contributed some great sentences.

Coffee, tea and biscuits were enjoyed whilst we were chatting. Julie and Arthur had recently travelled by train to Italy, via Karlsruhe, where they stayed overnight at a Premier Inn which was extremely good. They travelled on to Milan, Lake Garda and Vincenza - a beautiful, less popular city with amazing, elegant buildings designed by Palladio. We had an enjoyable discussion about Italian wine. Sue had been to an Italian wine tasting evening with Carlton u3a. Our next meeting is on 19th November.

Joy Brown

Local History

Our November meeting will be on Monday 4 November, and will be a tour of St Mary's Church in the Lace Market. We will meet at the Church at 10.00 am. If you want to join us and haven't let me know please do so asap so I can let them have numbers.

On Tuesday 3 December we will be meeting at 11:00 am (instead of 10 :00) at the Mapperley Plains Social Club. The Topic will be *The Old Market Square* and we will follow this up in the new year with a walk and talk around the Old Market Square. We will be having a buffet lunch after the meeting, hence the change of time. Please let me know if you are coming to the lunch.

Marian Donaldson

Singing Together

The Singing Group meets on the first Tuesday of each month, so our next meeting will be on 5 November.

We are not a choir and there is no requirement for you to have a wonderful singing voice. We sing popular and well known songs for pure pleasure, accompanied by my keyboard. All members are welcome to come along and have a go.

The two hour session starts at 2.00 pm with a break for refreshments at the half way point. The cost is £2 per person to cover room hire and refreshment costs.

We meet at the Westdale Lane Community Centre on Westdale Lane, NG3 6ES. It is immediately beside the bus stop at Kenrick Road for both the 60 and 25 buses. There is ample parking for our car drivers.

Gary Cawthorne

Outdoor Activities

Padel Tennis

Our final activity of this year was a session of padel tennis which is becoming very popular. Seven of us played at Notts County Ground courts in lovely weather.

It was great fun, even though we found it tricky to play off the back walls, which is one of the game's added challenges.

We all decided it should be on the programme for next year, so look out for it.

Eileen Braham



Family History

Sport and our Families

At our September meeting, members of the Group discussed how sport had impacted on their families. Although at this particular meeting fewer than half of us were present we were all able to contribute, in some cases very impressively!

At a previous meeting we had already heard that Richard Hill's great-uncle, Alfred Taylor, had been the polo manager for the King of



Richard's uncle Alec Taylor (with Reg Harris)

Spain at the time.

Carrying on the sporting tradition, Alfred's son had become a jockey and his son, Alec Taylor, became a well

known cyclist, rubbing shoulders with the likes of Reg Harris, and later becoming the British Cycling Team Manager in the 1950s.

Richard himself played football and cricket and the family supported Northampton Town Football Club.

Fiona Thorpe represented the school at both hockey and netball, but Fiona is most proud of the sporting prowess of her two grandchildren, both of whom have excelled at gymnastics.

Her grandson, Noah, joined the Notts Gymnastic Academy and by the age of 8 was competing in the National Men's Open Championship, in which he won the high bar and came fourth overall. He continued to compete in the

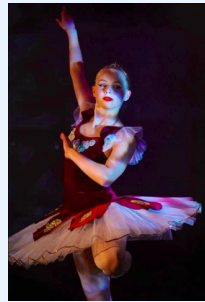


Fiona's grandson

National Finals between the ages of 9 and 14, and by the time he stopped participating, and switched to coaching, he

had won over 40 medals!

Fiona's granddaughter, Honey, also competed in gymnastics for the East Midlands, winning many medals before she switched to concentrate on dancing - ballet, tap, modern and disco, appearing on the stage at the Palace Theatre,



Fiona's granddaughter

Mansfield. She turned to coaching after attaining Grade 5 level honours in contemporary dance, theatre craft and jazz.

Anne Shipman's father, Len Softley, was a very distinguished standing volleyball player and he was responsible for starting a team



Anne's father

which appeared in what was in essence the first Paralympics. The team won the silver medal at the competition. Len then went into the training, organisation and

umpiring of Paralympic volleyball. In 2021, Anne's family received an email from the World Volleyball Association which granted Len a posthumous award for his part in the development of the sport. While alive, he had been presented with the British Empire Medal for his services to sport.

Anne's maternal grandfather had played cricket and football and her grandmother was a good golfer. Anne herself played for the school hockey team and her children took up climbing.

Julie O'Boyle has only just joined the group. She was able to tell us that her uncle, Leslie, had a trial for Notts County and was a promising footballer until he was wounded at Dunkirk. Her father played Gaelic football, although he was also in a cup-winning Catholic ordinary football team.

Julie herself used to do judo, and competed in the National Championships until a school change brought an end to her judo career.

Her family support both Notts County and Nottingham Forest, with her brothers pro County while she, her husband and children are Forest fans.



Julie O'Boyle' father

Finally, Claire showed a cup won in 1865 by one of her ancestors, called simply Private Dancer. It is unclear which sport he won it for, but he scored 42 points for the winning team.

Claire's father had been interested in all sports but he was a good shot and particularly enjoyed billiards. He was very fair minded and supported both Manchester football clubs.

Claire played football at Primary



Claire Wilkie

School and was in the team, but as girls were not supposed to play football at that time

another

school objected. The Headmaster of Claire's school withdrew rather than replacing her. At secondary school, she played in the lacrosse, cricket and tennis teams.

Considering there were only five members at this particular meeting, our families were shown to have participated in a wide range of sports, and some with great success!

Claire Wilkie

[Play Going - Lace Market Theatre](#)

The LMT is an independent theatre in Nottingham city centre, staging a varied programme of high-quality amateur productions throughout the year. It is housed in a beautiful Georgian building, dating back to 1760, in the Lace Market district.

Performances take place in the recently refurbished and air conditioned auditorium and in the upstairs studio, which also houses a licensed bar.

The theatre is staffed entirely by unpaid members and has a strong sense of community with nearly a hundred years of history behind it. It is a registered charity, with proceeds from ticket sales going into the cost of productions and upkeep.

The theatre can accommodate assistance dogs and has a loop hearing system in both the performance spaces. Unfortunately, they are unable to provide wheelchair access and please note the toilets are upstairs on the first floor with the studio and bar.

This group was set up to allow MaDu3a members to visit the theatre in the city without any fear of being alone in the city late at night. We book seats on request on Thursdays when performances are scheduled, approximately once a month.

Performances are either in the 120 seat auditorium or less formally in the studio that has 50 seats. The studio is upstairs (no lifts) and also has a licenced bar, a coffee bar and the toilets.

To find the theatre, the easiest way is from the Lace Market tram stop at the top of Hockley, walk down the hill past the exit from the Lace Market car park on Fletcher Gate, take first left into Pilcher Gate, up to the car park entrance, then right into Halifax Place, the theatre is then on your right.

[Gardening Group](#)

Thanks to Celia and Martin

Celia and Martin Lassetter have indicated that they are stepping down as conveners of the gardening group and we would like to express our thanks to them for the time they have given to organising the group.

A number of us are currently deciding the best way to move forward and would like to assure all its members that there will continue to be a thriving and active group.

At our next meeting in November there will be the opportunity for everyone to contribute ideas so we hope to see as many there as are able to attend.

Pauline Reed

I usually park on the Forest (or possibly Wilkinson Street at Goose Fair week) and catch the tram to the Lace Market stop.

The theatre has negotiated several discounts :

CAR PARK OFFER: Pay only £4.00 for 4 hours parking at the Lace Market car park when you visit the Lace Market Theatre! Bring your car parking ticket with you and get it validated at the Box Office desk in the bar.

DISCOUNT FOOD OFFER #1: All Bar One is offering patrons of the Lace Market Theatre a 25% discount on pre-show meals on the production of booking confirmation.

DISCOUNT FOOD OFFER #2: The Cross Keys is offering patrons of the Lace Market Theatre a 20% discount on pre-show meals on the production of this booking confirmation.

DISCOUNT FOOD OFFER #3: George's Great British Kitchen is offering patrons of the Lace Market Theatre a 15% discount on pre-show meals on the production of this booking confirmation.

DISCOUNT FOOD OFFER #4: The Pitcher & Piano is offering patrons of the Lace Market Theatre a 20% discount on pre-show meals on the production of this booking confirmation.

To add your name to the list of members please send an email to Playgoing - Lace Market.

Richard Hill

[Walking - Walk in the Park](#) (previously Short Walks Group)

The first of our park walks will be on Friday 8 November at Gedling Country Park starting at 10.00 am from outside the café in the park at the top entrance. Well behaved dogs will be welcome.

Full details will be sent by email to those who have registered interest in these walks.



Members of the Short Walks group

To receive emails with a view to joining these walks, please register interest by sending an email to walkinthepark@madu3a.org.

Walking - Strollers

The Strollers walk takes place on the first Friday of the month so notice has already been sent to members registered with the Group for November's walk. Once again, we are going around the West Lake in Colwick Park, weather permitting.

On 6 December, we are making a change to our usual programme of strolls. The Strollers are going to Highfields Park at the university. There is parking available at Highfields but most members will travel by bus or tram. Lifts to the tram will be offered to those that prefer not to drive at all. After our walk, we shall be visiting the Lakeside café for refreshments. For those who are interested and have time, there will be a free exhibition running in the Weston Gallery - *Tales from the Caves*, discovering the history of the caves underneath Nottingham. It opens at 12 noon. Full details with more accurate timings will be sent to members nearer the time.

To join the group, please email strollers@madu3a.org. The Group is for those who wish to walk at a gentle pace for a relatively short distance and enjoy a drink and a chat en route.

Carolyn Luckhurst

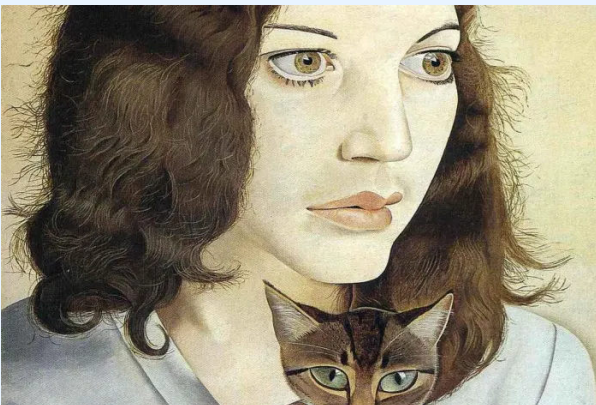


Art Appreciation



David Hockney wedding portrait 1970/1

Members' comments, particularly in this latter section, were insightful and certainly broadened the way we all viewed the examples. Just wonderful having a little controversy over Klimpt's 'The Kiss'! It made us all think about his composition more fully.



Lucien Freud Girl with kitten 1947

The second of our Art Appreciation sessions dealt with Composition and Focus (the choices an artist makes positioning his subject matter, and leading the viewer's eye round the canvas). We looked at a number of common devices used by a wide variety of artists and movements, before examining a few paintings in far greater detail.



Norman Rockwell 'The Problem we all live with' 1960

Please can I make a plea to members? If you know in advance (I appreciate last minute things do happen of course) that you can't make the session, please do let me know, as we have a long wait list hoping for the chance to sit in on a meeting, and this allows them the opportunity.

Our next meeting will be on 26 November. ([See website for details](#))

Jo Wilson

Wine Appreciation

At the October meeting of the Wine Appreciation group we had our own 'Judgment of Paris', tasting wines from France and California.

The Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, also known as the 'Judgment of Paris', was a wine competition organised in Paris on 24 May 1976 by Steven Spurrier, a British wine merchant, and his colleague, Patricia Gallagher, in which French oenophiles participated in two blind tasting comparisons: one of top-quality Chardonnays and another of red wines (Bordeaux wines from France and Cabernet Sauvignon wines from California). A Napa County (USA) wine rated best in each category, which caused 'surprise' as France was generally regarded as being the foremost producer of the world's best wines. ('*Surprise*' isn't quite how the French viewed the judgment, as you may imagine!)

This ended an era in which it was thought that fine wine came only from Europe.

The competition was re-enacted 30 years later, on 24 May 2006 - this time with simultaneous tastings in London and in Napa. Paralleling the 1976 event, nine expert tasters at each location judged the original red wines, now over thirty years old. The winning wine in both the US and UK was the Ridge Monte Bello 1971 from California.

Although our wines were much less expensive than those tasted in the competitions (some being in the hundreds of £££s) it was a very interesting exercise. We had no definite favourite country as opinions, and tastes, varied - but we all had a great afternoon!

Sue Cullen



The Film **Bottle Shock** tells the story of the original wine tasting - and it's a very entertaining film which I recommend.

Play Going - Playhouse

Hothouse Tickets - See notice at the end of this Newsletter.

Your Committee 2024-25

Valerie Wilkinson	Chair	Amanda Knight	Committee Member
Geraldine Chaffe	Vice Chair	Lesley Harrington	Committee Member
Elaine Lindley	Business Secretary	Liz Hagan	Committee Member
Joan Davis	Treasurer	Pat Smith	Committee Member
Linda Randall	Membership Secretary	Sheila Ward	Committee Member
Alison Gove-Humphries	Groups Support }	Sue Cullen	Newsletter & Tech Support
Eileen Braham	Groups Support }		

Technical Problems?

If you have any problems or issues with our website please don't struggle or, even worse, give up!

We have a team of people who will do their best to assist you to get the most out of our lovely [MaD Website](#) or with Beacon site issues.

Please contact the [Webmaster](#) or one of the MaD Tech Comms group :

Richard Hill, Sue Cullen, Liz Hagan, Andrew Harper

TRIPS AND VISITS

Limelight Tour – Postponed till 14 March 2025

Dolly Tour @ Mapperley Plains Social Club :

What a great performance - it was supported by the Dolly Band. A great night enjoyed by our members.

Matlock Illuminations & Firework Display :

Another successful event - see Facebook for photos

Tram Trip – Hucknall Market – Friday 1 November :

There are still places if you fancy this trip, join us either from the City Centre Tram stop or, if you prefer, from the Forest Park & Ride. See details sent separately from Geraldine ... but if you haven't seen it and want to join us [please do let us know](#).

Killer Trail – Thursday 14 November – Unwind the Lace Market Mystery (£1pp pay on the day) -

This is simply a fun thing to do – solve clues as you follow the route to discover evidence, eliminate suspected characters and weapons, and ultimately deduce whodunit!!

Clue Difficulty – 3/5 Distance 2km Duration approx 2.5 hrs Terrain – easy Accessibility - Mainly paved or solid ground route although some crossings may not have dropped kerbs and some of the route has cobbled streets

Depending on numbers we may split into two or more groups and if members prefer to do this in pairs that is fine too, just let us know so we print off enough clue sheets.

Ruddington Xmas Market - Friday 29th November :

Meet at Victoria Centre W3 Bus Stop 10.30 (it is only about 25-30 minute journey).

Xmas Lunch Thursday 12 December @ Stadium Leisure :

We have now booked for all those members who have paid the £5 deposit for this trip. **It starts at 11.00am** and is a "Turkey & Tinsel" event and includes 3 course meal, Bingo, Raffle & Live Singer. The cost total cost is £19.99 so [please pay your](#) balance of **£14.99 using the code 4XML**. It would also be helpful if you could let us know your menu choice ...

Starters	Main	
Home made Veg Soup (with bread roll)	Roast Turkey & stuffing (Creamed pots, Roast pots, Yorkshire pudding, Stuffing, Fresh seasonal veg & gravy)	Choice of Festive Desserts
Breaded Mushrooms (with Garlic Mayo dip)	Topside of Beef (Creamed pots, Roast pots, Yorkshire pudding, Stuffing, Fresh seasonal veg & gravy)	
Creamy Garlic Mushrooms (served on a toasted Bloomer)	Cod Mornay (Buttered new Potatoes, Peas & Carrots)	
Traditional Prawn Cocktail (brown bread & butter)	Vegetarian Sausage & Mash (Creamed potatoes, Pease & Onion gravy)	

A few members were on the list but have not paid the deposit after a couple of reminders, so we have presumed they have decided not to attend. If anyone wishes to go who has not booked we can check to see if they can accommodate - but there are no guarantees!

Marian Donaldson

Patient: "I have a ringing in my ears. " Doctor: "Don't answer!"

GENERAL MEETINGS

October's General Meeting

Sam Boote: George Green 1793-1841 : the man, the mill and the maths

Windmills are a big part of our history and also of our future. Sam Boote told us the story of George Green and how this 'miller' who owned Green's windmill in Sneinton in the early 19th century is also an internationally acclaimed mathematician, whose research laid the groundwork for inventions like the microchip, fibre-optics and MRI scanners. How the past does link to the present and future!!

Sam started by telling us about George Green's life about which little is known. Over half the audience had visited Green's windmill and it sounds like a brilliant place to visit! George Green's father was a successful miller and baker at a time when wheat was as important to the economy as oil is today. But during the corn riots of 1807, all the windows of his bakery were broken and it seems that this was the time that George Green Senior started to think about building a new windmill on a hill in Sneinton, which then was a small village on the outskirts of Nottingham.

His son, George Green Junior, was a child prodigy. Born in 1793, he only spent 4 terms at school, Robert Goodacre's school in Parliament Street. (*I have done a bit of research and I believe that the school was in what is now Kings Walk off Upper Parliament Street*). He left in 1802, aged 9, as the teachers had nothing more they could teach him! So George left to help his dad in the bakery and then the mill, then there is a big gap. We know he partnered, but never married, a Jane Smith and had seven children! This didn't stop him from writing a well received paper in 1828. George Green was largely self taught when he published his first mathematical treatise in Nottingham in 1828: *An Essay on the Application of Mathematical Analysis to the Theories of Electricity and Magnetism*. To get this work published, Green had to get a lot of subscribers who each paid 7s 6d (a working man's weekly wage). One of those subscribers was Sir Edward Ffrench Bromhead, a Fellow of the Royal Society, who had lots of contacts and probably secured him a place at Cambridge. His father had died in 1829 so he had inherited enough money to keep himself at university. He was definitely an academic and employed a mill manager to keep the mill going in his absence. Green had also joined Bromley House Library in 1823 and got a lot of support from its members. I know for a fact there is a George Green room in Bromley House as I attend a

knitting group there once a fortnight but I never knew just how important George Green was until this talk.

By the time he left Cambridge in 1840, he had published nine more

Mathematics papers, facsimiles of which can still be seen at Green's windmill. He died in 1841 probably of Miller's Disease from inhaling flour dust.

Sam illustrated the talk with lots of primary source material relating to George Green's life including maps, photographs, paintings and documents. He then went on to outline the history of Green's windmill from the mid 19th century till present day giving us some interesting stories including :

- How the windmill was sold to a solicitor and then to polish manufacturers ;
- How Albert Einstein visited Nottingham in 1930 but missed out on a visit to Green's windmill after staying too long at Woolsthorpe, Isaac Newton's house ;
- How the mill burnt down in 1947 and for twenty years was just a derelict site on top of a hill.

It was largely due to the efforts of a Physics professor at the University of Nottingham, Lawrie Challis, that George Green gained the recognition that he deserved. I couldn't believe it when Sam said he was on a par with Newton and Galileo. Lawrie and his supporters raised funds for the renovation of Green's Windmill. Lawrie also campaigned successfully for the installation of a plaque in Westminster Abbey commemorating the achievements of George Green.

Green's windmill is well worth a visit judging by all the pictures Sam showed us. Unfortunately, at the moment its sails are down for refurbishment but there is a lovely Victorian garden there and plenty of activities for children. It is open 10:00am 4:00pm, Wednesday through Sunday if you fancy a visit.

Thank you Cathy for organising this talk.

Alison Gove-Humphries



FUTURE GENERAL MEETINGS

Thursday 28 November : The speaker will be Paul Dyson

Paul will be talking about his lifelong passion for nature, art and concern for the environment: his talk is entitled 'The travels and adventures of a wildlife artist'.

Paul will have prints and cards available to purchase after his talk. Payment can be made by cash, cheque or card.

FRIDAY 27 December : PLEASE NOTE : This meeting is on FRIDAY
Our Twixmas meeting, with tea/coffee and cake, jigsaw swap, raffle, music and a quiz

Thursday 23 January 2025 :

PLEASE NOTE : This will be Zoom only - there will NOT be a meeting at the Social Club
The speaker will be Jo Richardson who will give us a talk entitled 'In the night sky'.

Meetings for prospective members - The Old Flower Shop

Prospective Members are very welcome to come to our General Meetings. Our Membership Secretary always has forms and information to take away.

The week following the general meeting, we have at least two people at The Old Flower Shop at 934 Woodborough Rd, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 5QS. We shall be there **from 10.30 am to 12 noon on Thursday 5 December.**

We book a table and are there to meet people who are thinking about joining our u3a. It's an opportunity for people to find out more about the groups and events so that they can make the very best of their u3a membership.

If you know of someone who is interested please ask them to come and see us.

NOTTINGHAM

Have your say on the budget consultation



You still have time to have your say on the Nottinghamshire County Council's Budget Plan - just click on the link - [Budget Consultation 2024](#) to read about it and then have your say. But don't delay as **this closes on 10 November 2024.**

Bonfire Night celebrations



The Visit Nottinghamshire website has a list of which it thinks are the best firework displays and Bonfire Night celebrations taking place in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in 2024!

Click on the link to find out where they are - [Bonfire Night celebrations](#).

Santa's Grottos across Nottinghamshire for Christmas 2024



Taking the grandkids to see Santa this Christmas?

The Nottinghamshire Live website has a list of local Santa's grottos - click on the link to discover them. [Santa's Grottos](#)

PUZZLES

Keep your little grey cells exercised with these puzzles. Answers at the end of the Newsletter.



The Little MaD Quiz

1. Which television sitcom character often claimed to have a cunning plan?
2. From which French wine region does Claret come?
3. In which 1972 film was the central ship named after the Greek god of the sea?
4. From which striker did Gordon Banks make a famous save in Guadalajara in 1970?
5. Which Russian communist leader had the real name Lev Davidovich Bronstein?
6. Which mathematical tool, usually semicircular in shape, is used to measure angles?
7. In which American state are Cape Cod and Nantucket?
8. Which sport takes place at a Basho?
9. The Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington plots were aimed at which English monarch?
10. Which outlaw was killed by Pat Garrett?

The Fruit Man

Mr Smith sells and delivers crates of fruit.

He can either put 8 large pieces of fruit or 10 small pieces of fruit into a crate. In one shipment he sent a total of 96 pieces of fruit.

If the number of large pieces is greater than the number of small pieces, how many crates of fruit did he deliver?



Odd one out

Which number is the odd one out?



What common phrases do these pictograms represent?

1		2		3		4	
5		6		7		8	

[Answers at end of the Newsletter - click to jump directly to them](#)

HEALTH



How old is your Hot Water Bottle?

The safety advice is that we should replace them every 2 years.

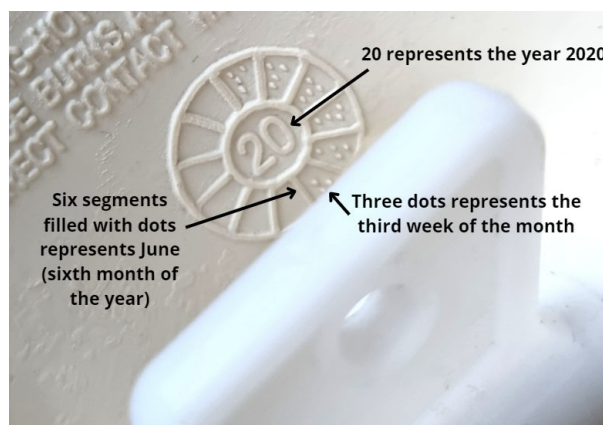
Can't remember how old your is?

Did you know that there is a daisy wheel on the neck or body of your hot water bottle which tells you its age?

- The central number on the daisy wheel indicates the year (e.g., '22' for 2022).
- The 12 segments around that number represent months. The filled segments mark its manufacturing month. For instance, if eight segments have dots, it means the bottle was crafted in August.

So if it's over 2 years old it's time to get a new one!

Click on the link to go to the NHS article to read more - [How old is your hot water bottle?](#)



Example: A dial on a hot water bottle showcases a centre with the number '20' and six segments filled with dots. This implies it was made in June 2020 during its third week.

Understanding your Blood Pressure



According to the British Heart Foundation (BHF), around 3 in 10 people in the UK have high blood pressure.

High blood pressure often goes unnoticed, leaving 5 million adults in the UK unaware that they have it. Checking your blood pressure regularly and understanding your results is crucial for early diagnosis and treatment.

Click on the link to go to the Patient website and read the article - [Understanding blood pressure](#)

Health benefits of Garlic



Garlic can do much more than just ward off vampires and add flavour to our meals.

From protecting us against the common cold to lowering our blood pressure, current research suggests it may have some real health benefits too.

The Patient website has an interesting article about the benefits of garlic - [Health benefits of garlic](#).

Peanut allergy? Mustard Warning!



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is advising anyone who has a peanut allergy to avoid eating any foods that contain, or may contain mustard, mustard seeds, mustard powder or mustard flour because of potential contamination with peanuts. These products are sold under several different brand names at several different retail stores.

The mustard ingredients can be found in food such as dips, sauces, salads and pre-packed sandwiches.

Investigations are currently ongoing to determine the root cause of the contamination, and any products found to be affected are being recalled. For now, it remains very important that anyone with a peanut allergy avoids consuming products containing mustard as an ingredient, until the FSA are satisfied that all of the affected products have been identified and recalled.

Parents and carers of children who have a peanut allergy should take care to check the labels of food they buy and, if eating out, or getting a takeaway, ask the restaurant or cafe about foods that might contain mustard.

Further information, including a regularly updated list of affected products, can be found here : [Contaminated mustard products](#).

RECYCLING

EVERYDAY
PLASTIC

The Hard Truth about Soft Plastics

Last summer, Everyday Plastic volunteers placed tracking devices into 40 bundles of soft plastic packaging and dropped them at front-of-store collection points at Sainsbury's and Tesco supermarkets across England.

In their new investigation, Everyday Plastic have been working with the Environmental Investigation Agency UK to reveal the hard truth about soft plastic recycling points at supermarkets - and it's not good news!

🔥 Of the tracked soft plastic packaging waste collected for recycling, 70% of the soft plastic that reached a final destination was burnt, not recycled

🇹🇷 The rest ended up at recycling facilities that downcycle soft plastic waste into lower value products – the majority of which were in Türkiye (Turkey).

⚠️ Environmental law charity ClientEarth warns that the results of the investigation show that supermarket soft plastic take-back schemes are misleading customers.

This link will take you to the Everyday Plastic website to read the report - [The hard truth about soft plastic](#).

Supermarkets are part of the problem. But they're also part of the solution - click on this link to sign the petition calling for Sainsbury's and Tesco to publicly back a 40% cut in global plastic production by 2040 - [Sign the petition](#).

TECH & SCAMS

Getting your Money back after a Scam

 BARCLAYS | Premier
Banking

Thanks to Carolyn Luckhurst for forwarding this link sent to her by Barclays - [Getting back your money after a scam](#).

Facebook are using your Information

Facebook are getting ready to expand their [AI at Meta experiences](#). AI at Meta is their collection of generative AI features and experiences, such as Meta AI and AI creative tools, along with the models that power them.

What this means for you

To help bring these experiences to you, Facebook will use public information like public posts and comments from accounts of people 18 years or older on the basis of legitimate interests. They are doing this to develop and improve [AI at Meta](#).

You have the right to [object](#) to the use of your information for these purposes. If your objection is honoured, going forward they won't use your public information from Facebook and Instagram to develop and improve generative AI models for their AI at Meta features and experiences. (If you've already objected, you don't need to submit another request). You can learn more about how they use your information in their [Privacy Policy](#).

If you want to object to the use of your information click on the link - [Object to your information being used for AI at Meta](#).

Facebook Marketplace Scam

Which?

Which? Has an article explaining what you can do if your Facebook Marketplace purchase turns out to be a scam.

Click on the link to read it - [Facebook Marketplace scam](#).

ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLES

The Little MaD Quiz

1. Baldrick (in the Blackadder series), 2. Bordeaux, 3. The Poseidon Adventure, 4. Pelé, 5. Leon Trotsky, 6. Protractor, 7. Massachusetts, 8. Sumo wrestling, 9. Elizabeth I, 10. Billy the Kid

The Fruit Man

He delivered a total of 11 Crates :

7 filled with large fruit ($7 \times 8 = 56$ pieces of fruit)

4 filled with small fruit ($4 \times 10 = 40$ pieces of fruit)

So there are 11 total crates and 96 pieces of fruit.

Odd one out

142 is the odd number.

All other numbers are divisible by 7

Pictograms

1. Love at first sight, 2. Back to square one, 3. Spill the beans, 4. Once in a blue moon, 5. Read between the lines, 6. Hold your horses, 7. Written in the stars, 8. Piece of cake

And finally ...

Some interesting facts -

- **The Eiffel Tower can be 15 cm taller during the summer, due to thermal expansion meaning the iron heats up, the particles gain kinetic energy and take up more space**
- **Australia is wider than the moon. The moon sits at 3400km in diameter, while Australia's diameter from east to west is almost 4000km**
- **Human teeth are the only part of the body that cannot heal themselves. Teeth are coated in enamel which is not a living tissue**
- **The Ancient Romans used to drop a piece of toast into their wine for good health - hence why we 'raise a toast'**
- **It's illegal to own just one guinea pig in Switzerland. It's considered animal abuse because they're social beings and get lonely**
- **The heart of a shrimp is located in its head. They also have an open circulatory system, which means they have no arteries and their organs float directly in blood**
- **People are more creative in the shower. When we take a warm shower, we experience an increased dopamine flow that makes us more creative**
- **Nutmeg is a hallucinogen. The spice contains myristicin, a natural compound that has mind-altering effects if ingested in large doses**
- **The Japanese word 'Kuchi zamishi' is the act of eating when you're not hungry because your mouth is lonely. (We do this all the time!)**
- **The real name for a hashtag is an octothorpe. The 'octo' refers to the eight points in the symbol, but according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary the 'thorpe' part is a mystery**
- **The last letter added to the English alphabet was 'J'. The letter dates back to 1524, and before that the letter 'i' was used for both the 'i' and 'j' sounds**

[Play Going - Playhouse](#)

Hothouse Tickets

For a number of years now we in the MaD u3a have enjoyed Nottingham Playhouse Hothouse performances.

We have experienced some fantastic professional theatre at substantially discounted prices.

So, we were very sorry to learn only last week that owing to the Council having to cut a grant of £60,500 to the Playhouse they are no longer able to offer the Hothouse scheme.

The scheme will finish in January 2025 and the pantomime is therefore the last performance they can offer us at Hothouse prices.

However, there is the Playhouse Community Club scheme which is offered to charities and, where eligible, will offer some discounted performances. It is unlikely that the discounts offered will be as generous as the Hothouse performances but will be below the normal box office price.

We have applied to the Playhouse to join the Community Club and are waiting to hear whether or not our application fits their criteria and has been successful. Once we have a response, we will let you know via the newsletter.

Lesley Harrington and Lynne Duckett