



# Melton Mowbray u3a April 2026 Newsletter

Registered Charity No. 1137780



Welcome to the April edition of your newsletter. We hope you'll find it both entertaining and informative. Details for sending contributions for future editions can be found on the last page.

## MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW CHAIRMAN

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Chairman of Melton u3a following our recent AGM and I'm looking forward to working with both the committee and members to further our mission of bringing people together through shared interests.

I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to both our returning and new committee members for their dedication to keeping our u3a vibrant and active. They do a brilliant job behind the scenes, facilitating the operation of our u3a, but ultimately it is our many group leaders who are at the core of what makes the u3a tick. Thank you.

So, as we finally leave the winter months behind and enjoy the (hopefully) brightening weather, I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming groups and events. Here's to a refreshing new season of learning and friendship together.

*David Ramsden Chair*

## THIS MONTH'S MEETING DETAILS

**"My Amazing Journey to Antarctica"**. Dave Pinion will be our speaker on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026**.

Dave first went to Antarctica in 2023 and visited the living quarters left by Robert Felcon Scott and Ernest Shackleton on their South Pole Expeditions in early 20th century. During his 33-day journey through the incredible scenery and wildlife of

Antarctica, Sharing the history with 80 fellow travellers and a group of experts all with the same desire to “stand on the shoulders of giants”; he caught “the polar bug”! Dave is going to share his story with a presentation of his trip with lots of amazing wildlife and scenery photos, and a few anecdotes.

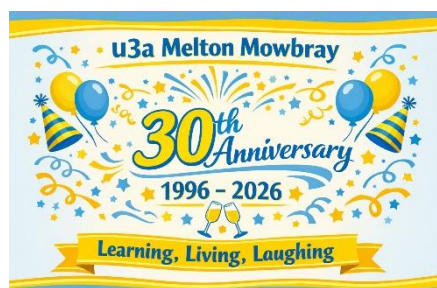
<b>Catering</b>	Gillian Tinsley, Laurraine Malon, Lynn Benton, Robin Benton, Joan Allen
<b>Meet/Greet</b>	Alison Asquith, Maureen Carruthers

<b>Forthcoming 2026 Program</b>		
<b>May 21</b>	John Chatfeild-Roberts	A year as High Sheriff of Leicestershire
<b>June 18</b>	Shanty Folk	Return visit by popular request
<b>July 16</b>	Stephen Evens,	Great Railway Reunification

Just to let you know we have nearly got 2027 booked up, but if you have any information about interesting speakers let us know especially if they are local and available at short notice as we never know when a booking needs to change.

*Coral and Vicki*  
[speakersecretary@u3amemiltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:speakersecretary@u3amemiltonmowbray.org.uk)

## COMMITTEE NOTICES



### **30th Anniversary Garden Party – Save the Date!**

The celebrations continue! As part of our special 30th Anniversary year, we are delighted to announce a charming Garden Party to be held on Friday, 21st August, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Baptist Church. Join us for an uplifting afternoon filled with delicious celebratory food, music, and entertainment, all set in a

warm and welcoming atmosphere. We will also be welcoming a few distinguished guests who will help make the occasion even more memorable.

We are keeping our fingers crossed for sunshine and smiles as we gather together to celebrate this wonderful milestone.

Please note that this will be a ticketed event with a **nominal charge, and booking will be required.** Further details, including how to secure your place, will be shared next month.

We look forward to celebrating with you!



We really want to make this garden party something special—but we can't do it without a small team to help bring it to life.

We're looking for just 3–4 people to join a small team to help plan the event. It won't be overwhelming—just a chance to share ideas, divide a few tasks, and create something everyone can enjoy.

If we don't get a few volunteers, the reality is that the event simply won't be able to go ahead.

It would be a real shame to miss out on something that brings everyone together. If you've got a bit of time, enjoy being creative, or just want to be part of making something happen, please consider getting involved.

Even a small contribution makes a big difference. Let's make this happen—who's in? Contact Sharon Baines – [membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk). Please let me know by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026 latest.

## **Let's Talk Tech – How It Can Help Melton Mowbray u3a. Think it's not for you? You might be surprised – read on!**

Technology is changing how we connect, learn and share knowledge. At Melton Mowbray u3a, we want to make sure our members can benefit from these tools in ways that are helpful, practical and enjoyable.

Here are three areas where you can help shape our digital future.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Learning Together**

Thirty years ago, the internet transformed our lives. Email, search engines and online communication once seemed unfamiliar – yet today they are simply part of everyday life.

#### ***Artificial Intelligence is the next step in that journey.***



We don't want our members to feel left behind. Instead, we want to create opportunities to explore AI together in a friendly and supportive way.

AI can help with many creative and practical activities, including:

- Creating artwork or music
- Writing newsletters, articles or policy documents
- Designing posters and marketing materials
- Editing text and generating images
- Exploring ideas and learning new skills

Recently, the national u3a organisation ran an "AI for Everyone" course designed to help spread knowledge throughout local u3a groups. Resources are now available for members and group leaders who would like to experiment with these tools.

Our aim is to create a space within Melton Mowbray u3a where members can learn about AI, share ideas and explore its possibilities together.

This isn't about creating extra work for group leaders – simply providing tools and guidance that may enhance activities and spark creativity.

You'll be hearing more about AI over the coming months.



### **Our Website – Creating a Great First Impression**

For many people, our website is the very first interaction they have with Melton Mowbray u3a. Research shows that visitors form an opinion about a website in just 50 milliseconds, so appearance and ease of use really matter.

A clear, modern and welcoming website can:

- Encourage potential members to explore further
- Improve engagement with existing members
- Create a positive image of our organisation

***To help achieve this, we are forming a Website Steering Group to work alongside the IT Committee Specialist to refresh and redesign our site.***

We are looking for members who have experience or interest in: IT, Website design, User experience, Digital communications. If you would like to help shape how Melton Mowbray u3a presents itself online, we would love to hear from you. Contact Sharon Baines: [membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk)



### **Tech Buddies – Helping Each Other**

Last year we introduced the idea of Tech Buddies – members helping fellow members with everyday technology.

Many people occasionally need a little support with things such as:

- Setting up a new device
- Connecting to the internet
- Solving computer or laptop issues
- Learning how to communicate online with family and friends
- Building confidence using technology

So far, only two members have volunteered, which means the project hasn't yet been able to get started. If we can gather around 6–8 volunteers, we will arrange an initial meeting to explore how the scheme could work. You don't need to be an expert — just someone comfortable with technology and willing to help others. If you would like to become a Tech Buddy, please contact:

Sharon Baines: [membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).



## **Important Announcement: Embracing a Simpler, Smarter Way to Stay Connected – Moving to Online Applications and Renewals**

We're excited to share an important step forward in how we manage memberships and payments. In the coming months, we will be introducing a fully integrated online application and renewal system, designed to make life easier for everyone.

This new approach is all about convenience, flexibility, and accessibility. With the online system, members will be able to:

- Pay quickly and securely using debit/credit card or PayPal
- Claim Gift Aid with ease
- Access a dedicated Members Portal to update and manage personal details
- Complete applications and renewals without the need for paper forms

By moving online, we'll not only save time for members but also significantly reduce printing, postage, and administrative costs—helping us use our resources more effectively. Importantly, this system will improve accessibility, especially for those who may find it difficult to attend in person.

***We want to reassure everyone that this change is preferred but optional. A manual process will remain in place for members who prefer it or are unable to access online services.***

Our goal is to support as many members as possible in making the transition—at a pace that works for you.

### **Support Every Step of the Way**

To help you feel confident using the new system, we'll be offering support sessions throughout 2026, including:

Friendly, hands-on guidance on how to use the online platform

Using your own devices, such as laptops, tablets, or smartphones if needed

No one will be left behind—we're here to help you every step of the way.

### **New Card Payment Option**

In addition, we will be introducing a SumUp card reader at meetings later this year. This will allow members to pay by card in person, reducing the need for cash and cheques and helping us lower transaction processing costs.

This is an exciting move toward a more efficient and member-friendly future. We'll continue to keep you updated as we roll out these improvements and share more details soon.

Thank you for your continued support as we take this positive step forward together.



## **GROUP NEWS**



### **Message from the PR Group and Social Media Team – Reminder!**

Please remember to take photographs of your group meetings and activities.

These images are really important for helping us engage with the public and showcase all the great things our groups do—especially as we celebrate our 30th year. We want to capture and share these special memories!

If you are a group leader and normally post on Facebook, please note that you only have access to the Members' Facebook Group. Only administrators can post on the public Facebook page. If you would like something shared publicly, please email your photos and any accompanying text to: [social\\_media@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:social_media@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**Thank you for helping us promote the wonderful activities happening across our groups.**

## NEW GROUPS NEWS!

### Groups started in March

**FRENCH BEGINNERS:** Please email [frenchbeginners@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:frenchbeginners@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**SPANISH BEGINNERS:** Please email [spanish@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:spanish@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**FLOWER ARRANGING 2-** Please email [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

### Groups starting in April

**BUS PASS** – Please email [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**OUTDOOR BOWLS** - Mondays 2-4pm April–September Holwell Bowls Club

Please email [outdoorbowls@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:outdoorbowls@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**PAINTING 2** – Time and place TBC. Please email [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

**WATERCOLOURS 2** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in the afternoon at Springfield Street Centre.

Please email [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

### A SPECIAL EVENT – Great fun!

#### **AFTERNOON DISCO!**

**2-5pm Saturday April 25th**

**Polish Club, Sandy Lane, Melton Mowbray LE13 0AW.**

If you enjoy 60's, 70's and 80's music this is for you! There will be a DJ with videos of the bands playing on a screen. As well as a bar and soft drinks. **The cost is £10pp in advance only.** If this one is popular there will be more! Please email Halina via [disco@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:disco@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk)

THERE WILL BE OTHER GROUPS! Email me with any suggestions.

Thank you very much to all group leaders and helpers.

*Dolores Harvey, Groups Co-ordinator  
email: [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk)*



## GROUP ACTIVITIES



### **PODCASTS — Add to Playlist April 2026**

#### **A Melton Mowbray U3A podcast referral group**

Here are three more podcast recommendations:

Firstly, two group suggestions both from BBC Sounds -

- Secret Leicestershire. 52 episodes
- The Gift – two series; 18 programmes in total.

And a suggestion from our good friend Greg -

Conan O Brian needs a friend on Team Coco's channel on YouTube.com - light-hearted conversations with various actors and celebrities. (Team Coco also has two other chat podcasts with Ted Danson and Woody Harrelson – “Where everybody knows your name” and “The three Questions”).

And lastly don't forget to look at some of the old favourites. Desert Island Discs had great programmes recently with Dwayne Fields, explorer and chief scout and Jessie Buckley, actress and recent Oscar winner. The back catalogue for Desert Island Discs goes back to 1940s! So plenty there to choose from. Let me know your favourite host from the last 80 years! I think Lauren Laverne is really good although I wasn't keen about her taking over.

*Penny Tomie*

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## **THEATRE NEWS**

### **Love the Theatre?**

#### **Get a FREE Companion Ticket!**

Did you know most major venues offer an Access Register to help customers with additional needs? Once you're signed up, you can grab a FREE COMPANION TICKET every time you book a show!

### **Why Join the Scheme?**

Save Money: Get a free seat for a buddy with your standard ticket

Book with Ease: Your details are saved so you don't have to resubmit paperwork every time.

Worry-Free Outings: Ensure your specific seating and accessibility needs are met

### **What Do You Need?**

To register, you'll just need a digital copy or photo of one of the following (dated within the last 18 months):

MMu3a DOES NOT KEEP ANY PERSONAL OR FINANCIAL INFORMATION ON FILE

- Blue Badge, Disabled Persons Railcard, or Bus Pass
- PIP, DLA, or Attendance Allowance letters
- A support letter from a doctor or healthcare professional
- National Disability Card or CEA Card
- Access, CredAbility or Nimbus card
- Cert or visual impairment (Vista card)
- Equipment Supplies Book, WPMS

### **Where Can You Use It?**

Local forms are available now for The Curve, Theatre Royal & Concert Hall, Kilworth House Theatre, and The Motorpoint Arena.

### **Need help signing up?**

If you are booking through Melton Mowbray u3a, we are here to help! Speak to us to find out how you and a friend can enjoy the best local shows for less.

*Contact Mandy theatre@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk.*

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## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



We had another very good attendance at March's meeting when Kim Kettle from **Long Clawson Dairy** talked about the history of Stilton cheese and the dairy itself. It was followed by a cheese tasting session with six cheeses from the Clawson Dairy. After filling ourselves with cheese, Kim was presented with a donation of £105 from the meeting's attendees for the charity "Farming Community Network".

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## LUNCH GROUP NEWS



### **The Maltshovel Barkby - A Pub Full of Surprises**

Our latest outing took us to a village pub many might usually pass by. This time, we stopped and found a place that delivered a full dining experience, from excellent starters to the occasional culinary curveball.

The atmosphere won immediate approval, warm, welcoming, and ideal for a relaxed lunch. A single long table made conversation a lively challenge, but spirits stayed high. Service,

despite our group of 19 in a fully booked venue, was impressively smooth. While an extra pair of hands might have helped, food arrived hot and plentiful, with some diners praising the team as superb.

The menu's wide range raised eyebrows but largely delivered. Highlights included a generously sized mushroom and brie starter, a well-received seafood chowder, and beautifully cooked sea bass. Portions were hearty, leaving few plates cleared entirely, and gluten-free diners enjoyed more choice than expected.

Not everything hit the mark. The whitebait was notably overdone, fish and chips divided opinion, and one dish carried enough garlic to linger long after dessert. Speaking of which, the sorbet portion left at least one diner underwhelmed.

A lesson emerged on wine ordering: "medium" is open to interpretation, so precision is advised.

Overall, feedback leaned positive. Some saw it as solid pub fare rather than a special destination, while others found it a delightful surprise worth revisiting - perhaps with a lighter hand on the garlic.

As ever, the company made the lunch date. Good humour and conversation ensured that even small desserts and bold flavours couldn't overshadow a thoroughly enjoyable gathering.

**Final Verdict:** A friendly, generous pub with a few quirks - well worth another visit.

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*Contact Mandy at [lunchfri@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:lunchfri@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).*

## Strolling 1

A short but beautiful stroll around Wymondham for the March outing. It was a fantastic day with bright, warm sunshine the whole day. After our stroll we drove up to the Windmill for refreshments - one member said she'd eaten the best Eccles cake ever. These flowers were growing on a dry-stone wall near the church.



Sue Baker

## Water Colours



The once-a-month watercolour group has been very successful since it started in December. It has been well attended and the recent tutorial with Amanda Jackson was amazing. We have therefore decided to start a second group in April. If anyone is interested in joining this new group, please contact Dolores on [groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

## Acrylics Group

At our March meeting, Sally Curtis provided a tutorial on painting a rose. The acrylics group will be meeting twice a month starting April and we plan to have more tutorials with Sally during the year. If you are interested in joining this group, please email [acrylics@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:acrylics@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).



## GROUP NOTICES



## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

For our next meeting on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2026**, we welcome back Clare O'Donnell talking about **"The Meltonian Dandies". Enclosures, Thrusters and the King of the Dandies; the rich and famous of the sporting society.** Come along and be entertained! Knowing Clare, this will be a highly amusing yet informative talk.



Entry is £3 per person (cash only please), and we strongly recommend that you pre-book your place(s) for the meeting by contacting us on [localhistory@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:localhistory@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk) providing your name and membership number. This enables us to contact you in the event of any last-minute alteration/cancellation of the meeting and gives us a guide as to the number attending so we can set up the room accordingly.

*Leaders: Claire Abbott, Debbie Adams, Geraldine Deverson, Brian Ellis*  
[localhistory@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:localhistory@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk)

## OUTINGS

We now have a 49-seater coach for the trip to **Wentworth Woodhouse and Gardens**, so more seats are now available. Members who showed interest please come to the Outings desk at next meeting and see us to book and pay. The cost is **£40.00 per person**. Please note that if paying by cheque an additional 40p is due to cover bank charges, i.e. £40.40. We have not booked guided tours to allow members to see the House and Gardens in their own time.

We have a trip to **York** on **Wednesday 23rd September 2026**

**Cost. £30** (if paying by cheque an additional 40p is payable to cover bank charges)

Pick up Wilton Road: 08.00 am

Pick up Tesco: 08.15 am

Depart York: 16.00pm

We hope to run a trip to a Christmas Market at either Coventry or Worcester in early December details to follow soon.

We are always at the monthly meetings come and see us at the Outings table. Suggestions for trips are always welcome.

If you cannot get to the meetings, you can contact Jean Pearson and she will tell you how to book and pay if you wish to go on a trip.

*Jean Pearson and Ruth Rigby*  
*outings@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk*



## WALKING GROUPS



### 2nd MONDAY WALKING GROUP

**Monday 13th April 2026**

**10:15 am for 10:30 am start**

Meet at the "Queens Head Inn, Billesdon, LE7 9AE.

*Group Co-ordinator Geoff Harris.*

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### 3<sup>rd</sup> WEDNESDAY WALKING GROUP

**Wednesday 15th April 2026**

**Meet at 09:45 am for a 10:00 am start**

Meet at **The Curzon Arms**, 44 Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves, Leics. LE12 8QZ.

Toilets available and lunch can be pre-booked prior to walking. Lunch is booked for 12.30pm hence the earlier start.

The walk will be approx. 5 miles, mainly on field paths and tracks.

NB: Please let me know by Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April if you are intending to walk and if you will be staying for lunch. Menu to view <https://www.thecurzonarms.co.uk/eat>

*Terry Hopper (Group leader/Co-ordinator).*

## 1<sup>st</sup> THURSDAY WALKING GROUP

The **Thursday 2nd April 2026**, walk will be from the Wheatsheaf PH, Brand Hill, Woodhouse Eves, LE12 8SS. Be ready to walk for 10 am. Please use the car park, entry via the back (exit) way. Toilets will **not** be accessible. Lunch cannot be ordered prior to walking, but a table has been booked. The menu is available online with specials every day.

The walk of about 6 miles is through Swithland Wood, Bradgate Park and across Lingdale Golf Course back to Woodhouse Eves. Please let Jeannie know by the Monday before if you intend to walk/stay for lunch, so that guests can be included if numbers are low. Leaders: Pete and Jeanie Tetstall  
Mobile: 07815 960573

The **Thursday 7th May, 2026**, walk will be from the Stilton Cheese PH, High Street, Somerby, LE14 2QB. Be ready to walk for 10 am. As the car park is small you may need to use alternative parking. Toilets will be accessible and if food is required it can be ordered prior to walking. If you intend walking/staying for lunch, please let us know by the Monday before. The walk of about 6 miles is from Somerby to Burrough then towards Little Dalby and back to Somerby. It is quite hilly and very muddy in places.

*Stuart and Wendy Posnett, Group Leaders*  
Email: [walkingthursday1@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:walkingthursday1@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).



## ANNUAL GROUP REPORTS



### CRIBBAGE

The Group started in 2018 with about twenty members; we now have thirty members. Twelve of the original members are still in the group. We could accommodate a few more members if anyone is interested, as not everyone comes every time. We are a friendly group of mixed ability from beginners to league players. The original beginners are now quite capable players, but we all help each other. Several members have now joined teams in the Melton League.

### CURRY CLUB

The curry club was created in late spring 2025, with the aim of arranging either a monthly meal out, to explore all things related to Indian/Asian cuisine, including how to cook the perfect Indian, health benefits of the different spices and to generally be a group where those of us that like to try different styles of Indian cuisine, could get together in a relaxed social setting.

The first event held was at the Harborough Hotel on 24th June with about a dozen attendees. Considering that many of the members didn't know each other, with an even mix of couples and those coming on their own, we had a very chatty evening, enjoying each other's company as well as sampling some good food.

A request was made via email to ascertain what members wanted from the group, we learnt that members wanted to learn about curries and Asian food, along with meals out at local restaurants. Since then, we have been to several restaurants both within Melton and further afield. We aim to travel a maximum of 20 miles from Melton town centre.

Four members also attended the Leicester Cookery School and enjoyed the afternoon. We have also had a two-hour Curry cooking event from Mick at Happy Chap Foods. Mick handed out several tasters and cooked a curry in front of us, informing members how to cook the curry and some accompaniments. He also answered questions when asked and was on hand to deliver good advice. This was attended by 28 U3A members, both from within the curry group and the wider U3A. We are currently planning the next event and very much looking forward to it. We currently have between 6 and 18 members attending the meals and meet on the first Tuesday of the month. There are currently 25 members within the club, it is very much a join us when you can group and attending monthly is not compulsory!

If you would like to know more about our group, please email [curry@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:curry@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

*Brian Ellis, Group Leader*

## **DISCUSSION – BEING HUMAN**

We are a small, friendly group who meet on the afternoon of the second Monday of the month to discuss various topics which interest us. Over the past year we have attempted to resolve assorted problems which assail us, such as THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON LIFE HAS TAUGHT ME, PROGRESS and SCAMS. We never seem to reach a definite conclusion, but we always have an interesting exchange of views.

The group is at full strength, and we even have a waiting list of interested potential members. We aim to limit the membership of the group to eight or nine only. We have found that this is the largest number suitable for an easy exchange of views without resorting to talking over one another. Currently the membership is full, but if you are interested in joining our waiting list, please contact Simon Wright the group leader at: [discussion\\_beinghuman@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:discussion_beinghuman@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

*Simon Wright, Group Leader*

## **LOCAL INTEREST**

***St.Bartholomew's Church, Welby LE14 3JL***

***Easter Saturday***

***Coffee Morning***

***Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April***

***between 10 am and 1pm***

***Please join us for Hot Cross buns, tea, coffee and cake and see our lovely rural church decorated for Easter.***

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**Easter Sunday**  
**Holy Communion Service**  
**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 3pm**

*A very warm welcome assured to visitors old and new. Please stay to enjoy refreshments after the service*

## GET PUZZLING!

### **LAMBS**

1. In the nursery rhyme, who had a little lamb that followed her around?
2. Which poet was described as, 'Mad, bad and dangerous to know', by Lady Caroline Lamb?
3. Which South African born cricketer played for (and captained) England in the 1980s?
4. Which brand of rum features the White Ensign flag on its label?
5. Which herb is often used when cooking roast lamb?
6. What term is used for an orphaned lamb reared on a bottle?
7. Which actor played Archie Mitchell in Eastenders and Mick Shipman in Gavin and Stacey?
8. Dr Hannibal Lecter is a character in which psychological horror film of 1991 based on a novel by Thomas Harris?
9. What is the English translation of the Latin phrase Agnus Dei?
10. Which sauce is a popular accompaniment to roast lamb?

Answers on page 16.

*Kindly provided by Judy Smithers*

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### **APRIL MATHS PUZZLE**

This puzzle concerns the distribution of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> dates in the calendar. Did you know that the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the month is, statistically, more likely to be a Friday, than any other day of the week, but only by a very slight margin.

*U3a Maths Challenge, Week 297, Question 3*

- (a) In any calendar year, what is the maximum number of times the 13th of a month can fall on a Friday?**  
**(b) Is it possible for a year to have no Friday the 13ths?**

As we have just had two consecutive months with a Friday 13<sup>th</sup>. This seemed like an appropriate time to ask this question.

Solution will be published in the next edition of the newsletter.

*Kindly provided by CJ Rupp*  
*Maths for Fun Group Leader (among other responsibilities)*  
*maths@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk*

# FINAL NOTICES

## Annual Reports due for the May 2026 Newsletter:

- Drama
- Family History 1
- Family History 2
- Flower Arranging
- French Improvers
- French Conversation

## Annual Group Reports

The Annual Group Reports item is included to allow group leaders, or group members to provide an overview of the activities they've undertaken with their groups over the year. We have typically gone through the groups list in alphabetical order, but members are welcome to submit a report at any time during the year, particularly if you are a new group and/or have spaces for new members. It also has the effect sometimes of giving other members ideas for groups they could start and that is always welcome.

We do not wish to put any group leader under pressure to write an annual report but merely provide a platform for your group to showcase achievements and talk about what your members have gained from being part of the group.

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## At the meeting next month on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026

**Speaker:** John Chatfeild-Roberts, A year as High Sheriff of Leicestershire

**Catering:** Linda Needham, Hilda Cox, David Cooper, Barbara Cresswell, Janet Tarratt

**Meet and Greet:** Lesley Dyason, Eric Faulconbridge

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COMMITTEE		
Chairman	David Ramsden	chairman@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Vice-Chairman	Sue Gowans	vchair@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Business Secretary	Carol Thompson	secretary@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator	Dolores Harvey	groups@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Treasurer	Linda Newbery	treasurer@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Sharon Baines	membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Speaker Secretary	Victoria Reynolds/ Coral Batchelor	speaker@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
IT Advisor	CJ Rupp	admin@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Claire Abbott	editor@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**Publicity** – use this email to spread the word about u3aMM activities - [social\\_media@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:social_media@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk).

### Let's Go ... Together

This is a group of WhatsApp users who share with other members their upcoming activities, inviting others to come along. You either post your desired activity or answer someone else's post to fill your days or evenings. If you would like to be included on this WhatsApp group, please contact [membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk](mailto:membership@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk)

## GENERAL ENQUIRIES

General telephone number 0300 102 4512

Website: [melton-mowbray.u3asite.uk](http://melton-mowbray.u3asite.uk)

Your committee is here to help keep Melton Mowbray u3a running smoothly and efficiently. Committee members are always keen to receive feedback on our u3a and encourage members to contact us with any issues, thoughts, suggestions on how we can keep it thriving.

## GET PUZZLING! ANSWERS

Answers to '**Lamb**' quiz

1. Mary
2. Lord Byron
3. Allan Lamb
4. Lamb's Navy Rum
5. Rosemary
6. Cade lamb (also Poddy lamb in some areas)
7. Larry Lamb
8. The Silence of the Lambs
9. Lamb of God
10. Mint Sauce

## Solution to March's Maths Puzzle

I'm going to start this answer section with an apology. I used an AI application,



ChatGPT, to generate an image for last month's puzzle. It looked better than any of the freely available stock images. However, it had a not very hidden flaw. If you look at the image to the left, you will see 3 cubes, but only the bottom one is a dice\*. Dice are designed so that opposite faces always add up to 7, [1,6], [2,5], [3,4]. Here we see 2 supposed dice, where faces totalling 7 are adjacent. I did request a stack of 3 dice. While this image is evocative of that goal, it is not accurate. At some level, I

was aware that AI systems can make mistakes, because the data they are trained on does not make real world constraints sufficiently prominent. I'm not apologising for the

image, or my method. I'm apologizing, because I knew this type of error was possible, but I forgot to check it before the newsletter went to press.

\*[I am aware that the pedantic singular is 'die', but I'm not convinced that this is in common usage, except perhaps when translating *Alea iacta est* = "The die is cast.", see Julius Caesar and Asterix the Gaul].

Returning to the matter at hand: **What is the maximum possible sum of the visible faces if you stack 3 dice on top of each other on a table to form a tower?**

You need to use the fact that opposite sides of a dice add up to 7. We have 2 dice with 2 opposite sides covered and 1 where only 1 side is covered. So, you start with 2 dice each showing 14 spots. The top dice is also showing 2 pairs of opposite side, plus whatever is on top. From that we can work out that the only value, that we can maximise, is the one on top. We start with 6 and then add  $3 \times 14 = 42$ . The maximum value is 48.

You can generalise from that and address the other questions as they were presented in the non-simplified form:

**(a) What is the maximum possible sum of the visible faces if you stack  $n$  dice on top of each other on a table to form a tower?**

Here we just have to replace the 3 with  $n$  to give:  $14n + 6$ , as the maximum value.

**(b) What is the maximum possible sum of the visible faces if you use eight dice to make a  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  cube on the table?**

For the second part you have to return to the basic properties of dice. You have one layer of 4 dice which are only showing 2 faces each. Above that you have a layer of 4 dice that are showing 3 faces each. However, there is a considerable difference between this problem and the last one. None of the faces are opposite face, so you are not forced to count faces that must add up to 7. There is much more scope to maximise the value.

You can arrange the dice so that each dice in the bottom layer shows 11 spots and each one in the top layer shows another 4:  $(4 \times 11) + (4 \times 15) = 104$ . That must be the maximum value.

I hope that all makes sense. The full bore version of the question, which was rated as 3 out of 4, so a hard medium, was not really much more difficult, than the simple one that we set, for our newsletter puzzle.

*C. J. Rupp, Maths for Fun Group Leader (among other responsibilities).  
maths@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk*

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**Thank you** to everyone who contributed to this month's newsletter.

<p><b>NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS:</b> Please send by <b>25<sup>th</sup></b> of each month to Claire Abbott, editor@u3ameltonmowbray.org.uk. It would be much appreciated if you did <b>not</b> leave it until the last minute.</p>
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