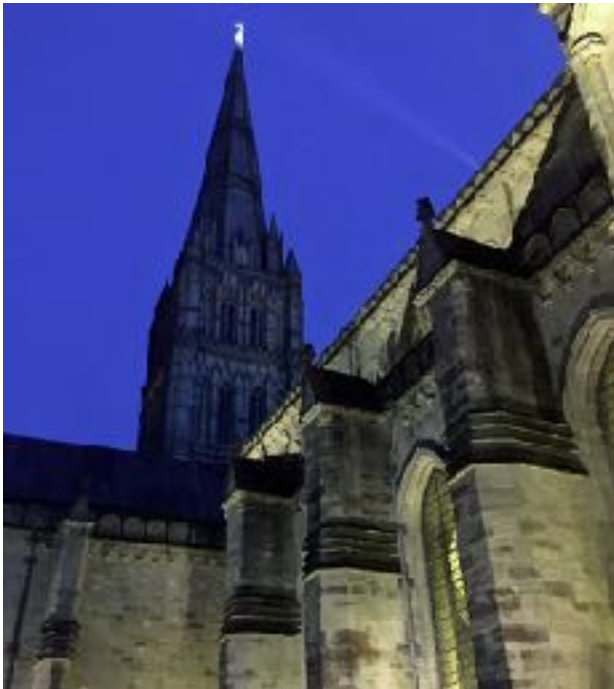


SPIRE U3A



THE FOURTH IRREGULAR NEWSHEET



LIGHT beams highlight the cross at the top of the spire.

Picture by ANF - DI
Photography Group

HERE we are again, happy as can be, all good friends and jolly good company, as the old song says.

More and more Spire folk are experiencing the joys of zoom chats on the second Monday morning of the month and the third Friday evening of the month. If you have not discovered the fun yet of being in company with friends, despite government restrictions, come and join us (details at the end.)

Tipple Time in November focussed on our favourite local walks when I discovered what a knowledgeable lot you all are when it comes to the best views, byways and nature reserves round here.

I hope you have enjoyed the online talks programme that we put together for you. Events to take us up to the end of the year are listed somewhere below. We finish 2020 with a real gem. Don't forget to join the conversation, when you have watched something, by posting your comments on Spire u3a Facebook, writing an item for the newsletter or talking about it at Coffee time on zoom.

And Wow; we predicted the Booker prize. Well, not exactly. But *Shuggie Bain*, by Douglas Stuart, that featured in our talks programme in October has won. The talk is still available here.....

<https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/douglas-stuart-the-making-of-shuggie-bain/player>

With any luck we might fit another of these 'irregulars' in by the end of the year. Meanwhile, look after yourselves and take advantage of all that u3a has to offer: learn, laugh, live.

Maureen E Frost

townpump@hotmail.co.uk

THE INTEREST GROUPS

BOOK CLUB

Picture a group of 7 or 8 people sitting round a table taking it in turns to talk about a book they have recently read and hearing about titles that others have read.

Book Club normally meets once a month from Autumn to Spring but is unable to meet at the moment. Leader Stella Tobi said: "Usually I choose the books, not a particular book but a type of book - a thriller, crime fiction, a novel, even poetry - so we all bring something different to the meeting. We hear about other books that way, books that people have enjoyed or not enjoyed. We are not trying to be brainboxes." Book Club will resume as soon as it is sensible to do so.

CANASTA

Perhaps Canasta's popularity lies in its use of wild cards, which makes the game high scoring and unpredictable. Originating in Uruguay and using two packs of cards the game is said to require both tactics and strategy. Group Leader Christine Hill explained: "We have two versions of the rules active in our group; we decide which one to use each time we meet. The two styles of rules make it more interesting.

"You can play canasta on your own if you want to but the rules then are rather odd." The game has a terminology all of its own.

"Canasta comes from the Spanish word meaning basket," Christine explained. "The aim is to get canastas - a set of seven cards. Each canasta can be pure, worth 500 points, or impure with wildcards worth 300 points."

The group is currently paused but is a small group and plans to get back together when it can, carrying on in its own merry way.

**"Don't miss out:
join Spire U3A
Facebook
Group where
timely
messages are
posted"**

WATERCOLOUR

Like the Friday morning groups the Watercolour Painting Group has devised ways of continuing.

"Somebody chooses a topic for the month, not unlike the system described in the latest edition of Third Age Matters," explained Group Leader Jenny Whitemore.

"We paint at home, then take a photo of what we have done and send it to each other by email."

Each painter describes how they went about it and everyone else is invited to critique it.

"None of us had painting experience in our youth. 2020 has been a year when keeping in touch and self-help has been more important than ever before.

"The comments are mostly kind and helpful. We have always been a group of self-help and we have always helped each other," Jenny said.

"I have just done one of a cart in a field; it could be any vehicle on a farm. Last month we did Line & Wash/Buildings. It will be my turn to choose the topic next month."

The watercolour group, with about nine members, keeps in touch by telephone and email. Some work from photographs they have taken, most have books they can refer to and others have found 'how to' advice online. They agreed the current system between themselves when they realised that they would not be able to meet together in the hall at Harnham for some time to come: "It works and it means we carry on painting," said Jenny.



Line & wash/street by Les Hankinson



Line & wash/street by Jenny Whitmore

SPIRE TALKS PROGRAMME

Week beginning 29/11

Exquisitely precise measurements of light have allowed astronomers to achieve what might seem impossible: weighing the universe, and thereby establishing the geometry of space.

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/weighing-the-universe>

Week beginning 6/12

Solving a 500 year old mystery in Leicester - how they knew it was him.

<https://fb.watch/1fOL9MRsng/>

Week beginning 13/12

Naughty things to look for in church buildings

https://fb.watch/1fP9yM_F7a/

Week beginning 20/12

The Ringing Isle

<https://fb.watch/1fPi-l6bif/>

Week beginning 27/12 - two items

A short entertaining talk on Education

[https://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity/up-next?](https://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity/up-next?utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=social&utm_content=2020-8-22&utm_source=t.co)

[utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=social&utm_content=2020-8-22&utm_source=t.co](https://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity/up-next?utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=social&utm_content=2020-8-22&utm_source=t.co)

& Unmissable - the Genius Puppetry of Warhorse

<https://youtu.be/h7u6N-cSWtY>

SOMETHING TO DO

See page 10 of *Third Age Matters (Issue 44)* or

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning>

ZOOMS

COFFEE TIME Monday 14 December at 10.30am

TIPPLE TIME Friday 18 December at 6pm