



Alcester U3A Newsletter 2020



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



HAPPY NEW YEAR



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Monthly meetings are held at 2.30 pm
on the first Tuesday of the month

at The Eric Payne Community Centre, Conway Fields, St Faith's Road, Alcester



Notes from the Chair

John Pickering

There we go – Christmas is over for another year & decorations are back in the loft! I do hope you all enjoyed the chance to catch up with friends & family & that the coming year will be a happy & healthy one for you all. As you all know, at Alcester U3A, we have a reputation for being friendly & welcoming, so I would like to expand on this by asking if any of you would be interested in becoming “befrienders” to our new members? The idea is that if a new member comes along to our meeting, s/he can be brought to sit with a “befriender”, who would help them feel welcome & tell them what goes on, both at the monthly meetings & beyond. If you would be willing to become a “befriender”, please contact me or any other member of the Committee. Many thanks.

Monthly Speakers December

Gill Stanley

Over 100 members enjoyed learning more about The Heart of England Forest, the history of how it all started with Felix Dennis planting trees around Studley and Alcester and how we can now contribute to its continuing success. After the initial talk there were lots of questions from the audience about how to become a Friend of the Forest, how to volunteer, where we can walk and the wildlife we may see. This continued as members had a cup of tea & a mince pie.

January Meeting

Songs, ditties and tunes. Our speaker, Alan Benjamin will liven up the afternoon whatever the weather and we can all let our hair down and have fun.



In Case of Emergency (I.C.E.) cards

When you receive your 2020 membership card, you will find in the envelope an I.C.E. card, which we ask you to complete & keep on your person when attending any U3A events, trips or meetings. This is to comply with General Data Protection Regulations, which deal with the keeping of personal information. In actual fact, the I.C.E. card is very useful at any time, in case you are unfortunate enough to have an accident or are taken ill! You may remember that you were asked to write this information on the back of your membership card last year, but, as your I.C.E. card will not need to be renewed annually (unless of course your circumstances change), you will no longer be required to do this. However, if you do require a new I.C.E. card for any reason, please ask myself or any other member of the Committee. **Lyn Pickering Membership Secretary**

Annual Spring Lunch

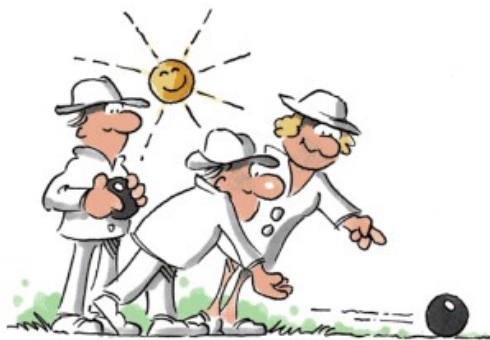
Don't miss our very enjoyable Annual Spring Lunch, which will be held on **Thursday 21st May 2020** at the **Kings Court Hotel**. Further details to follow in the new year.



Chairman	John Pickering		
Vice Chairman	Lindsay Evans		
Treasurer	Jan Carr		
Secretary	Valerie Hamblin		
Membership Secretary	Lyn Pickering		
Programme Organiser	Gill Stanley		
Minuting Secretary	Lyn Pickering		
Archives	Jan Rowe		
Groups Organiser	Bob Andrews		
Committee Members	Richard Dean	Karyl Rees	Joe White
Web:	www.alcesteru3a.btck.co.uk	Annual Sub £15	Only members can join group
			Ruth Dutton

DUE

DONT FORGET: Subs for the year 2020 are now due - renewal form attached or available at the meeting



GROUP NEWS

We are intending to start a new group in May 2020 for those wishing to play at lawn bowls. The plan is to use the facilities of Bidford-on-Avon Bowling Club, which have been kindly offered to us. The starting time 10.00 am finishing at noon on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday From May until September.

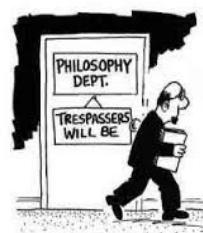
Flat soled shoes are essential but all other equipment will be made available to group members wanting to enjoy this opportunity.

A sheet for names will be put out for the next monthly meeting. Bob Andrews 01789 763202 or John Douglas 01789 750704 will try to

answer any questions you may have.

PHILOSOPHY GROUP

The Philosophy Group has a few vacancies and is looking for new members. If subjects such as minority rights in a liberal democracy, Kantian ethics, the effect of feminist philosophy on moral and political philosophy and existentialism as seen in fiction might interest you why not come along to one of our meetings and see what goes on? Meetings take place at the Malt Mill Centre at 14.00 on the third Tuesday of each month. Please contact the group leader Peter Tugwell (peter.tugwell@btinternet.com; 07718 282710) if you would like to know more.



THEATRE TRIPS REMINDER

TEN TIMES TABLE

Saturday 29th February at Cheltenham

The coach will leave from the Greig Hall at 10.00 am prompt



NEXT YEAR'S HOLIDAY LAND OF PRINCE BISHOPS, NORTHUMBERLAND AND BEAMISH MUSEUM

Departure date: Friday 4th September 2020 for 5 days (4 nights).

Price: £400.00 per person (single room supplement £60)

What a pleasing response I've had to this year's holiday to Northumberland!!! The rooms are filling up fast, all the single rooms are either booked or reserved and there are only 5 twin/double rooms left, so if you have reserved a room (especially a single) I will need your completed booking form and deposit at the 7th January meeting or before please, as your booking is not assured until I receive them. On the subject of single rooms – if you have asked for a single room and have someone who could share a twin room with you (they do not have to be a U3A member), it would help the situation and save you £60 into the bargain! I have asked Lindsay, the Vice Chairman, to make the announcements at the January meeting so that I can be available to receive your bookings and answer your questions.

John Pickering.

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

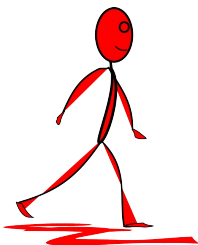
Philosophy



Peter Tugwell

We had a quiz at our December meeting based on the topics we had looked at during the year, and we surprised ourselves with not only the breadth and depth of our discussions, but also that we remembered the salient points. With questions ranging from Popper's philosophy to the purposes of punishment, from justice to 'Just War', Confucianism to Capitalism, Buddhism to Big Brother, we still managed to produce some better responses than the ones on the prepared answer sheet. We also gave some thought to how we might structure differently our meetings, and we came up with a four monthly cycle, involving two topics of the sort we usually do but with the addition of onesession looking at a work of fiction with a philosophical basis, and one with a five minute presentation by a member on a pre-announced subject leading to a general discussion. The first book we are looking at is The Outsider by Albert Camus (April), and the first presentation-based session will be on Kantian ethics (February). We have

a few vacancies so if there is anyone out there who would like to join us as we try out these new ways of doing things, you would be very welcome – please contact the group leader. **The topic for January's meeting is: 'How should a liberal representative democracy deal with the rights of minorities?'**



Strollers Group

Jane Sergeant

We managed to do the Oversley Green stroll in December and the weather was good for once. We went down Malt Mill Lane and viewed the War Memorial seats and sculpture. The river was running fast, because of all the rain and we could see the height it had reached as we crossed the bridge in Oversley. The view of Alcester was admired, which you see from the road, where there are many thatched houses. After crossing the river again, we went back to the town via Bleachfield Street and had drinks in a cafe.

The next Stroll will be on Monday 13th January. We will meet at Alcester Scout Hut at 1 30pm and will walk around Alcester.

Pub Ambles

The December amble started in Great Alne Park with the idea of following the old D class road to the Coughton road and then follow the old railway track back for lunch. Weather ruled that day. The leaders were worried that after rain the previous day that the small stream that they had managed cross on the recce may cause a problem. An extra early morning recce proved very worthwhile. The small stream was now a pond! A new amble route was required. Considering the boggy conditions of field footpaths we did manage just under 4 miles without getting too muddy. A welcome lunch was ready for us at the end.



Linda Bradley

Pub Walks

Trevor Wraight

To say that the Saturnalia stroll was a damp squid was an underestimation with the weather playing the part of the Lord of Misrule. The paths were already underwater and the rain persisted all day. Any attempt at celebrating the solstice by burning a Yule log, was doomed to failure. However, although we abandoned the walk, we were able to celebrate with a Santa Pie at the Little Lark in Studley. Christmas dinner in a pie, innovating and tasty. Here's to better weather in the New Year.

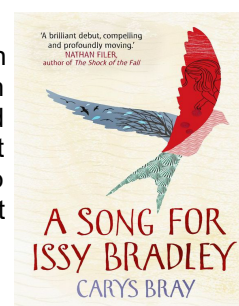


Reading Group 2

Ruth Dutton

Our title for December's meeting was '**A Song for Issy Bradley**' by Carys Bray. The Mormon faith is central to the story which revolves around one family and how each member deals with the death from meningitis of the youngest child. The irony being that their faith, which should have drawn them together, actually divides them. Several group members started but did not complete it and I think we agreed that for most it was a sad and difficult read. Those of us who completed it and probably hoped for an optimistic ending were left wondering how to interpret the final sentence. I rest my case!

Ruth Dutton standing in for Linda Jennings who is caring for koalas caught in the fires in NSW,



Science

Gill Stanley



The subject for our research had been **Green Energy**. We found out that many nations rely on fossil fuels to provide most of their energy needs but this is a problem. Eventually fossil fuels will run out and also they pollute the air, soil and water and produce greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

Wherever possible countries are now turning to Renewable Energy Sources. These include Solar Energy, Wind Energy, Hydroelectricity, Biomass Energy, Geothermal Energy, Ocean Energy and Hydrogen. All of these can be used to

produce electricity without adding more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Only some of these renewable sources are available to everyone but as we become increasingly aware of global warming their use will increase wherever it is possible.

The topic for our research for our next meeting will be "Is there a Scientific basis for old wives tales and superstitions?"

Because of New Year celebrations and holidays our next meeting will be on February 5th.

Alcester U3A Interest Groups

Group Coordinator: Bob Andrews

If you would like to join a group, please contact the group organiser

Group	Meeting	Time	Venue	Organiser
Beginners Family History	Various Monday	2.00 pm	37 Station Road Alcester	Linda Cooper
Church Visits	4 th Tuesday	11.00 am	Various Recommencing May 2017	John Cooper
Computer	Free email Computer Newsletter (Circulation 40 members)			John Ruffell
Crafts	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday September to March	10.00 am	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Linda Bradley
French	3 rd Tuesday	2.30 pm	The Library, Oversley House	Brian Titterington
Garden Lovers	2nd Thursday April – October To be confirmed	2.30 pm	Various	Janet Alleley Kath Lloyd-ajones
History	3 rd Thursday	10.15 am	Jubilee Court Community Room	Paul Brenda
Jazz & Big Band Appreciation	2 nd Wednesday except August & September	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Tony Badham
Keep Fit	Every Wednesday	11.45 am	Alcester Baptist Church Hall	Norma Haigh
Music Appreciation	Last Wednesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Jan Rowe
Outings	As Advised		Various	Joe White
Philosophy	3 rd Tuesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Peter Tugwell
Poetry too	Last Friday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Bob Andrews
Pub Ambles	2 nd Friday 3 rd Tuesday	10.30 am 10.30 am	Various Various	Linda Bradley
Pub Walks	3 rd Friday	10.00 am	Various	Trevor Wraight
Rees Reading	2 nd Monday	10.15 am	Various	Karyl Rees (GROUP FULL)
Reading 2	2 nd Tuesday		Various	Linda Jennings
Science	1 st Wednesday	2.00 pm	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Gill Stanley
Spanish	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday of the month	10 am	Jubilee Court Community Room	John Douglas
Strolling Group				Jane Sergeant
Theatre Visits	As Notified			Joe White
Yoga on Monday	Every Monday 2 groups	10.15 am 11.45 am	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Karyl Rees (GROUP FULL)
Bridge	To be confirmed	TBC	The Old Dairy, 3 Arrow Grange, Alcester B49 5PJ	Ian & Lorraine Thompson 01789 762447 lrthompson144@hotmail.com
Mah Jong	4 th Thursday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Richard Dean 07496 239318 rbmdean@sky.com
Chess	1 st Monday	2.00 pm	1105 Evesham Road Astwood Bank B96 6EB	Colin & Sandra Taylor 01527 892852 colintaylor11@btinternet.com
PROPOSED NEW GROUP				
Bridge	To be confirmed	TBC	The Old Dairy, 3 Arrow Grange, Alcester B49 5PJ	Ian & Lorraine Thompson 01789 762447 lrthompson144@hotmail.com