



Monthly meetings are held at 2.30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at The Jubilee Centre, Conway Fields, St Faith's Road, Alcester



Notes from the Chair

Karyl Rees

We are not alone! A week or so ago I attended a meeting of the Coventry & Warwickshire U3A Network, a group of representatives from local U3A's who have up to now met just once a year. I found it a very useful meeting and the intention now is to meet three times a year to support each other, arrange cross-group projects and combine speaker lists, for example. One member mentioned research she and others had done on the 1600's Hearth Tax in Warwickshire, which was part of a national project headed up by Roehampton University.

The Warwick District group of U3As has close links with Warwick University, which has a Public Engagement Team organising an 'ideas café'. One of the topics they are keen to investigate is Healthy Ageing. For more information on the University's Community activities visit the School of Life Sciences Upcoming Events page.

One way to keep a healthy, active mind is to join a discussion group. We have been asked again to try to set up another reading group, so if you are at the meeting, there will be a sign-up sheet. If not, please let me or Bob Andrews know by e-mail or 'phone.

Monthly Speakers October Meeting

Gill Stanley

Due to the unexpected absence of a speaker, we had an unusual meeting. A number of our members stood up & told us about their holidays, personal unusual experiences, local group activities etc. It turned into a most enjoyable afternoon and I personally am indebted to everyone present. It has been suggested that we might include a Members meeting again in the future.

November Meeting

Our speaker will be Philip Bowen, talking about "The Gunpowder Plot – a Midlands Rising." We all know about the involvement of Coughton Court but many of us do not know & understand the truth about the wider Midlands connections in the plot..



Big Band, Swing & Jazz

Tony Badham



If you enjoy listening you can't do better than joining our Group of "like minded" U3A members. With our varied interests we try to present all types of Jazz & Swing and don't limit ourselves to just the sounds of the music but are happy to listen to presentations by those of our group who have knowledge of the history, development and the current local "scene" of the genre.

If you just want to listen to the music and enjoy a laugh & a cup of tea, that's fine! But if you have your own selection that you would like us to share, then that's OK too, plus we can help with recording etc. Alternatively, you could just compile a "play list" for someone else to present on your behalf!

We meet at 2.00 pm on the 2nd Wednesday in alternate months, starting in January & finishing in November. Your 1st session is free & if you decide to join us after that, you will be asked to pay £10 per year (assuming the room rent doesn't rise next year).

If being tied to a regular meeting is a problem, you are welcome to come as a casual member at £2 per session!!

The group meets at the Community Hall in Malt Mill Lane, Alcester

Chairman	Karyl Rees
Vice Chairman	John Pickering
Treasurer	Jan Carr
Secretary	Valerie Hamblin
Membership Secretary	John Ruffell
Programme Organiser	Gill Stanley
Minuting Secretary	Lyn Pickering
Archives	Jan Rowe
Groups Organiser	Bob Andrews

Committee Members	Richard Dean	Lindsay Evans	Joe White	Ruth Dutton
Web:	www.alcesteru3a.btck.co.uk	Annual Sub £15	Only members can join group	



THEATRE TRIPS

Saturday 1 December, Malvern Theatre
“The Habit of Art” by Alan Bennet



the Coach will leave the Greig Hall at 11.00 am.

The trip was booked & paid for some time ago, so if you are not sure you can check the list at the November meeting or email Joe at joe_patwhite@msn.com There are some reserves for this trip but if you wish, you can add your name to the list of reserves..

Saturday 23 February 2019, Malvern Theatre
“The House on Cold Hill” by Peter James

Cost (including best stalls seats. coach & driver's tip): £32.00 each
the Coach will leave the Greig Hall at 11.00 am.

A spine-tingling smash hit play starring Joe McFadden.

29 have booked so far, with 4 more listed as reserves due to possible holidays, leaving up to 11 seats available to make up the party to 40. The booking & reserve lists will be available at the November meeting. Would those who have booked please pay Jan Carr by (made out to Alcester U3A) at the November meeting, and absolutely no later than 4 December.

Any seats remaining after the November meeting will be made available to non U3A members before returning reserved seats back to the Theatre.

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

History



Gerry Barker

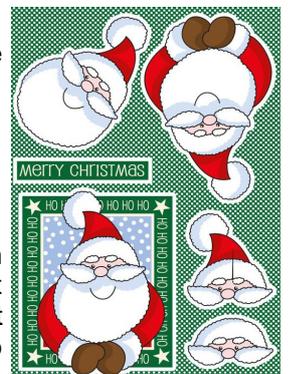
Last month Lynne Yates gave us a very fascinating presentation on maps and famous mapmakers. The earliest map of the known world is on a Babylonian clay tablet 2500 years old. Early maps of the world were based on the work of the 2nd century Greek geographer Ptolemy of Alexandria, and used for many centuries. However, Ptolemy grossly underestimated the size of the world – so when Columbus used it on his epic voyage, he got a few surprises! The largest surviving medieval map is the famous Mappa Mundi in Hereford Cathedral. Pioneering British cartographers include Christopher Saxton who in the reign of Elizabeth I did a survey of the whole country, then published an atlas of country maps. Soon afterwards John Speed produced the first individual maps of all English counties. Then in the 17th century, Scotsman John Ogilvy published the first British Road Atlas, a really beautifully illustrated masterpiece. The first colour one-inch Ordnance Survey map was printed in 1887, the familiar “straight line” London tube map came out in 1931 (earning its designer a whole 10 guineas!), and the London A-Z was published in 1936.

Our November subject is a history of English sayings.

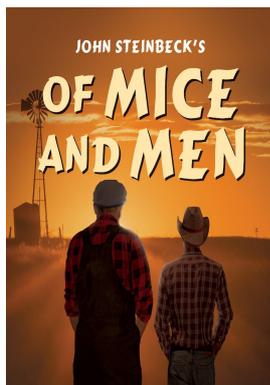
Craft

October 5th saw us swapping designs for cards using a cuttlebug machine etc. and on the 17th we used a decoupage technique to make new designs.

Linda Bradley



Rees Reading

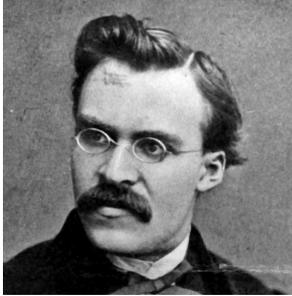


Karyl Rees

It was a long time since any of us had read anything by John Steinbeck and we all enjoyed 'Of Mice and Men'. It was a short book which some of us read in one or two sessions, but contained much to discuss. It is the story of two farm workers who moved from job to job during the Depression. It could almost have been the script for a film (as it was later) with fine descriptions of places and people. The action is set in California and what happens to George and Lennie and others on one farm. The book was banned in several US states for the racist and 'vulgar' attitude of its characters (The Grapes of Wrath was also banned), but it is of its time. **Next meeting: Seggs Lane**

Philosophy

Peter Tugwell



The topic for our October meeting was 'Nietzsche', and it took place one day after what would have been his 174th birthday - coincidental, if you accept that concept. Having had a break from metaphysics in September, it was time to indulge in some more mental gymnastics in attempting to bring our collective thoughts to bear on this most difficult of German philosophers of the 2nd half of the 19th century. We found it relatively easy to get an idea of his life, his upbringing, education & so on, & similarly with his main published works, but having done so, we were up against those inherent difficulties of a) to what extent are we justified in looking at his life to understand his philosophy & b) as a philosophy group we needed to remember that it was his philosophy we were interested in rather than his literary achievements. Another difficulty arose out of the temptation to 'compare and contrast' his philosophy with that of Schopenhauer, the subject of our August meeting. So, what did we identify as being the main strands of his philosophy? Perhaps the most significant strand for us was his pre-occupation with greatness as the ideal, for him personified in great men such as Napoleon; the ramifications of this show little regard for ordinary men, the 'herd' as he referred to them. The keyword here is 'übermensch'. Next, the disavowal of a morality based on divine approval, sanction or reward. We looked at his infamous claim 'God is dead' & in teasing out what he meant by this, we noted his idea that we had killed God overtime by drifting away from religion, but without putting anything in its place, with his insistence that we needed to achieve a reevaluation of ... well, our values, without any recourse to a deity. The third strand we looked at involved his view of the human condition; here we 'compared' his view of human suffering with that of Schopenhauer, but whereas Schopenhauer pessimistically attributed the cause of all suffering to 'will' & where escape was only possible for short intervals through music and art & 'longer' through leading an ascetic life, Nietzsche saw suffering as a consequence of existence & something that had to be used & 'affirmed' in an optimistic world view. Two further strands – Nietzsche's disavowal of pity (& other altruistic attributes), & his Zarathustra, the prophet of the 'übermensch', a self-doubting prophet who would rather you argue with him than blindly accept his teachings (if you can understand them). Thus, we all 'spake', and probably we will again if & when we look at nihilism, but not next time, as our November topic is 'The application of philosophy in modern politics'. **There will not be a meeting in December, owing to the proximity of Christmas.**

Music Appreciation

Jan Rowe

John Ruffell treated us to another delightful outdoor concert, on wide screen, by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra this time conducted by Placido Domingo & entitled 'Spanish Night'. The two soloists were violinist Sarah Chang & soprano Maria Martinez who delighted us with Massenet's 'Meditation' from 'Thais' & a fantasy concert on 'Carmen', other orchestral pieces included Emmanuel Chabrier's 'Espana Rhapsody', Johann Strauss's 'Spanischer Marsch', Jose Serrano's 'Romanza' from 'Los Claveles' & for the finale Placido Domingo sang, while conducting, Paul Lincke's 'Berliner Luft'. Our next meeting is on 28th November when David Ralph will present his programme. Everyone is welcome to join us.



Pub Ambles

Linda Bradley & Bronwen Bunting



Strong winds and rain were forecast for Friday's amble so instead of walking the twelve would be walkers congregated at the Mother Huff Cap for a social meal.

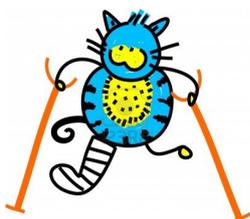
Tuesday was a better day and seven of us donned our gaiters to protect us from the wet grass and mud. We kept to mainly grassy footpaths going up over the Great Alne hills through young and ancient woodland. Comments were made that the recently planted woodland was already blending in with the original. We passed the busy stables housing many fine horses some of which were returning from exercise. The walk was a very pleasant 4 miles with some glorious views in many directions.

The next Pub Amble will be on 20 November. The Amble which would normally take place on 9 November has been cancelled as so many of the Amblers plan to join the U3A organised stroll of Historic Places in Birmingham.

Pub Walks

Trevor Wraight

The October walk based on The Fish & Anchor at Offenham was cancelled by Trevor due to a stretched tendon which requires resting. Walks have now been cancelled for November and December and will restart in the New Year. Best wishes for a speedy recovery from a frustrating injury from all the group who look forward to walking in 2019.



Spanish

The Spanish group continues with their fortnightly meetings at Jubilee Court. The standard is slowly improving but we still welcome any additional members who would like to learn a language to improve their holidays and to learn what to order at a Spanish restaurant in 2019.

Contact John Douglas on 01789 750704

John Douglas



Science

'This month we discussed "large things". "This ranged from giant redwood trees in California to the largest bridges, buildings, aircraft, planets, and so on.

Our next topic is on "Fabrics"

Bill Bayley

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	Pat White
Garden Lovers	2 nd Thursday April – October To be confirmed	2.30 pm	Various	Janet Alleley Kath Lloyd-ajones
History	3 rd Wednesday	10.15 am	The Library, Oversley House	Gerry Barker
Jazz & Big Band Appreciation	2 nd Wednesday bi-monthly	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	Adrian Madge
Poetry too	Last Friday	2.00 pm	Broad Cedar, Tibbets Close	Bob Andrews
Pub Ambles	2 nd Friday 3 rd Tuesday	10.30 am 10.30 am	Various Various	Linda Bradley Bronwen Bunting
Pub Walks	3 rd Friday	10.00 am	Various	Trevor Wraight
Rees Reading	2 nd Monday	10.15 am	Various	Karyl Rees (GROUP FULL)
Science	1 st Wednesday	2.00 pm	1 Henley Street	Bill Bayley
Spanish	16 January 2018 & fortnightly thereafter	10 am	Jubilee Court Community Room	John Douglas
Theatre Visits	As Notified			Joe White
Yoga on Monday	Every Monday 2 groups	10.30 am 12.00	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Karyl Rees (GROUP FULL)

BOURNEMOUTH & HAMPSHIRE TRIP



On 1st October we set out by coach on our tour of Hampshire. This was the first residential trip for Alcester U3A and was organized by John and Lyn Pickering who, it must be said, did a splendid job. En route to Bournemouth we visited Cirencester and then on to Whitchurch Silk Mill and museum for a guided tour. The level of skill required from the silk mill workers was an eye opener, as was the price of the finished articles!



Day 2 commenced with a guided tour of Beaulieu Palace, and we were fortunate to have as a

guide a retired actor who could have come from the set of Downton Abbey. He brought great timing and wit to his delivery and brought the past to life. From there we travelled to the National Motor Museum which for me was one of the highlights of the tour and a trip down memory lane. Following this we travelled to Buckler's Hard, an 18th century village where some of Nelson's ships of the line were built, including the famous Agamemnon. Various historical houses in the village were open to the public such as the shipwright's cottage and a delightful village pub complete with a vast open fireplace. This was followed by a trip on the Beaulieu river where we saw a glimpse of the distant Isle of Wight.

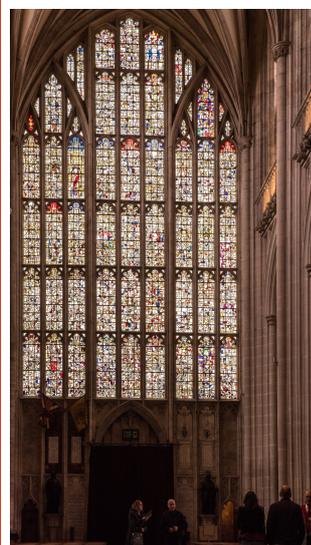


On day 3 we were blessed by bright sunshine as we journeyed to the New Forest. We arrived at Lyndhurst for a fascinating talk at the Verderer's Court by a young lady who has inherited Commoner's Rights to, inter alia, keep horses and pigs in the Forest. An ancient body, the Verderer's Court and Agisters [forestry rangers]

have numerous responsibilities and duties to resolve disputes and generally ensure the continued good governance of the New Forest National Park. Following the talk we walked a short distance to St



Michael and All Angels church, a Grade 1 listed 'Victorian treasure house' including pre-Raphaelite windows, stunning carved wooden angels, and the grave of Alice Hargreaves, nee Liddell, who was the real Alice in Wonderland. From there we spent the afternoon exploring Lymington and sitting in the sunshine around the small harbour area.



On day 4, after checking out of our hotel, we spent some time exploring Bournemouth town, parks and pier before travelling on to Winchester where we had lunch and a guided tour of the Cathedral. The cathedral is an absolute architectural gem and our guide had encyclopedic knowledge of the building and showed us the grave of Jane Austen and some exquisite stained glass created by William Morris. The Izaak Walton, fisherman's chapel was closed for renovations. In the late afternoon we travelled back to Alcester feeling as if we had been away for a week after enjoying such a well organized and comprehensive tour. A big thank you to John and Lyn for all their hard work in making the trip such a success.

Clive Owen



... For details of a further holiday opportunity, see overleaf.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT LIVERPOOL

(Organised by Evesham U3A)

Ferry Across the Mersey & Port Sunlight Village



Come and enjoy a 3-day break to the very under-rated city of Liverpool. Like many UK cities, Liverpool has been transformed over recent years and is now a very popular tourist destination, not only for its connections with the River Mersey and the Beatles, but its many museums and not forgetting its two Cathedrals!

Our fabulous offer price includes:

- ◆ Return coach travel from Evesham
- ◆ Two nights dinner, bed & breakfast accommodation at the Novotel Liverpool City Centre
 - ◆ A morning guided tour of Liverpool
 - ◆ A cruise on a famous Mersey ferry
 - ◆ Entrance to the U-Boat Story Museum
- ◆ Group entrance and guided tour of Port Sunlight Village (the village was founded by “Soap King” William Hesketh Lever in 1888, the village was built to house Lever's “Sunlight Soap” factory workers, but today is home to a fascinating museum, beautiful architecture, a work-class art gallery and stunning parkland.
- ◆ Full ABTA financial protection

Another interesting itinerary that we hope you will find appealing!

* If, as we hope, we reach a minimum of 45 members, the price will reduce to £219.00 per person. (based on two people sharing)

Single occupancy supplement (limited availability): £58.00

Optional Travel Insurance: £20.00 per person.

This trip, organised by Evesham U3A, is using Harry Shaw Group Travel who are ABTA covered. Several of us have been on one or other of their breaks in the last couple of years and have been well satisfied with them.

If you think you would like to partake, please contact Jean Griffin (Tel: 01789 750772) who will send you a dedicated brochure with a booking form and doubtless answer any questions.