



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



It seems I missed out on a really enjoyable outing down the Severn Valley – thanks again to Joe for organising this.

I'm pleased to say that there should be no shortage of chairs at the May meeting – we were very close to running out last month, but your Committee agreed to pay for another twenty chairs for the Jubilee Centre.

I'm looking forward to our **Annual Lunch at the Kings Court Hotel** on May 18th, and it will be good to share it with even more members this year. Another event coming soon is the new members' tea, where members who have joined since the middle of last year will be invited to meet our Group leaders and members of the



Committee. This will be at the end of June.

At the end of August, the **National Conference** will be held at Nottingham. If you are interested in attending, please speak to a member of the Committee.

Monthly Speakers

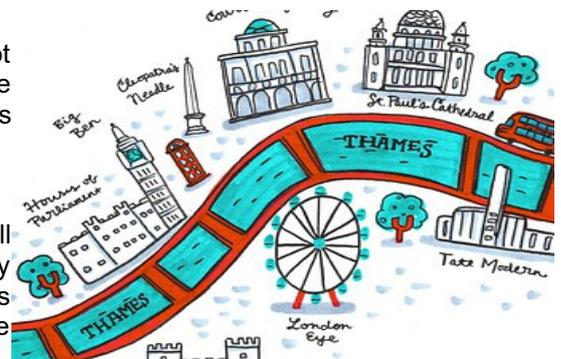
Gill Stanley

April Meeting

We were pleased to welcome back Keith Cattell and were not disappointed. He delivered a fascinating talk explaining the historical evolution of the English House. As usual his talk was clear and detailed and delivered with humour.

May Meeting

Captain William Wells is our speaker in May. Many of you will remember him describing how he used to pilot huge ships safely into ports all over the world. This time his talk is entitled "London's Liquid History". I am sure we shall find out a great deal about the history of London in relation to it's river.



Theatre Visits



There is just one seat left on each of our forthcoming visits - "Our Man in Havana" at Malvern on 15 July (Tickets £24) & "How The Other Half Loves" at Cheltenham on 11 November (Tickets £30). For both performances the coach will leave Alcester at 11.00 am. If you would like that last ticket for either show, contact Bronwen Bunting at the May meeting or email Joe White beforehand. Lists showing who has booked for each show, together with an opportunity to list as a reserve (there can be late cancellations for a variety of reasons) will be on display at the meeting.

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

Committee Members
Web:

Ruth Dutton, David Ralph,
www.alcesteru3a.btck.co.uk Annual Sub £15

Judith Wharrad, Joe White
Only members can join groups



Looking at Churches

All those people who were raring to go and visit a church in April had forgotten that we did not start our programme in 2016 until May and it will be the same this year. Our first excursion will be very local and I have managed to obtain the services of a very knowledgeable guide! Details will follow when I return from my tour of European cathedrals.

LOWER SEVERN VALLEY TOUR

Winifred Hancox

Our tour of the Lower Severn Valley from Worcester to Chepstow with Brian Draper met all the essentials of a successful coach trip – good weather, coach & driver, tour guide, venue and organisation.

The sun shone all day as we enjoyed Brian's excellent commentary on our elevated views of the wonderful countryside in all its Spring glory. After a coffee stop in Tewkesbury (*Abbey Mill pictured*), we continued along the narrow lanes to Gloucester for a generous 2-hour stop for lunch and the sights, taking in the cathedral and the docks, then onward to Chepstow, passing the NT Dutch Water Garden at Westbury-on-Severn (definitely on our calendar for a visit).



When the Estuary and its 2 suspension bridges came into sight, the coach driver navigated a narrow lane to Beachley for us to appreciate the awe-inspiring engineering of the Severn Bridge and impressed us all with his reversing ability to get us back out!

Brian was full of historical nuggets: Nelson rested the fleet at Chepstow, conveniently close to Emma Hamilton at Monmouth; Oak from the Forest of Dean was used to build many of the boats that fought the Spanish Armada.

Finally we drove over the Severn Bridge for our return on the motorway to Alcester at the end of a fantastic day which included bonus sightings of peregrine falcon, dolphin and seal for some. Full marks to Joe.

Interest Group News



Beginners Family History

Linda Cooper

Another lively meeting on 24th April, Next meeting May 15th - 37 Station Road from 13.30. **All researchers welcome.**

Crafts

Linda Bradley

We were shown how to Crochet by Dot who was a real expert. Most of us remember our mothers and grand mothers using the crochet hook to make amazing things but not done it ourselves. One of our number had started a matinee coat for her first born and still has not finished it! The baby is now 44!



History

Gerry Barker



Our April topic was the Lunar Society, a group of quite remarkable men - philosophers, inventors, scientists - who used to meet at each other's homes in or near Birmingham, to discuss and exchange ideas on many different subjects. The Society was at its height in the 1770's and 1780's, and their ideas contributed enormously to the progress of the Industrial Revolution. The Society got its name because members used to meet once a month on the Sunday or Monday closest to the full moon - for the very practical reason that, with more light for the journey home, there was less chance of being mugged!

There were never more than about 14 members of the Lunar Society at any one time, but ten of them became Fellows of the Royal Society. Perhaps the five most famous names were Matthew Boulton (industrial entrepreneur), Erasmus Darwin (physician and evolution scientist), James Watt (steam power pioneer), Josiah Wedgwood (pottery manufacturer and designer), and Joseph Priestley (scientist)

and theologian).

Next month we have a presentation on British life during the Roman occupation.



Music Appreciation

Jan Rowe

For our April meeting we were taken on a delightful trip to Italy with our musical tour guide Tony Ingram. While the hailstones fell outside we enjoyed Rossini's "The Silken Ladder" overture, Albinoni's beautiful adagio from his "Oboe Concerto" in D Minor, an excerpt from Verdi's opera "Rigoletto" and "The Drinking Song" from his opera "La Traviata". After our tea break we continued our tour with the moving rendition by the choir "The Sixteen" of Allegri's "Miserere mei, Deus", Respighi's "The Birds" and his "Pines of Rome – Appian Way" and finally an excerpt from Puccini's opera "La Boheme". Our next meeting is on 31st May when Pam Gough will be presenting her programme, new members are always welcome.

Philosophy

Adrian Madge

Our subject for April was 'Ethics and Society' which raised much discussion. Perhaps the word 'ethics' slips too easily from the tongue with little thought of its origin or significance. Simply it presents a moral value judgement on an action or decision made by a person or persons, but from where or from whom does the judgement arise? Unlike the law, there is no reference list of offences by which it is measured; it is more an agreed code of acceptable behaviour but varies according to the community in which and by whom it has been agreed, be it national, cultural, professional or just the local golf club. This presents the thorny problem of what is morality? How do we sort 'Good' from 'Bad'? Merely "acceptable to the customs and beliefs of the people"? In the present state of the world this is a very varied and unstable item. Acceptable to a higher authority? This could be the original concept in the days of Clan Chiefs, Lords and Kings and finally rested with God. But there are now so many Gods it seems, rightly or wrongly, that the 'voice of the people' and 'social media' are taking over and ethical behaviour is in danger of falling into the abyss of history.

The subject for next month's meeting will be "Language and Truth".



Pub Ambles

Linda Bradley



7th April 2015.

A lucky thirteen set off from the Bull's Head in Wootton Wawen on the first Friday in April (a week earlier than usual) for an amble through the fields to Little Alne, close to the river in several places. The return took us up hill among the sheep and lambs, then down to re-cross the river and follow the little used Pennyford Lane back to Wootton Wawen for lunch at the Bull's Head.

Pub Walks

Trevor Wraight

Fully prepared, the climbers began the annual ascent of the east face of Bredon Hill in fine style leaving base camp with a cheery wave to the postman. Camp One, amidst the bluebells, passed with barely a pause as did Camp Two in the dazzle of the gorse. The leader insisted on a gasp for breath and water at Camp Three to admire the views before the assault on the summit. Expecting a long pause to catch breath at the crest of the ridge he barely had time to latch the gate before being encouraged on along the summit path. Here the views really did kick in with the Cotswold ridge, the Severn Valley, the Forest of Dean and the southern peaks of the Malverns on one side and the Avon Valley, Worcestershire and Warwickshire on the other. At Derek's Bench, we enjoyed a friendly chat with a group of walkers from Gloucester U3A before descending through the beech woods and a very pleasant contour along infrequently walked grassy paths. A thought provoking view of the ancient Beauchamp Castle was followed by ancient ash trees, possibly as old as the castle. If only they could tell us their story! The Star Inn at Ashton Under Hill, as always, provided an excellent meal and some good beer.



Jazz & Big Band Appreciation

John Watts

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, 10th May, 2.00 pm. at the Malt Mill Lane Community Centre. The presenter will be Geoff Harrison.

Rees Reading

Karyl Rees



'The Green Road' by Anne Enright was different from the blurb, which promised a get-together of four adult children visiting their mother for Christmas and sharing reminiscences. It was certainly about four siblings with details of each at one stage of their lives - too much detail in some cases - and a mother who turned out to be very selfish, deciding to sell her home and move in with a daughter, without reference to the daughter then moving on to a son when the daughter becomes ill and needs support. The green road is an old track which the mother remembers from childhood and decides to walk along when lunch does not go her way, and she drives away on her own, bringing more attention on herself when a search for her has to be set up.

Science

Bill Bayley

We discussed surface tension this month, and had a few experiments to demonstrate it, some of which even worked. Next month we are discussing 'osmosis'.



Alcester U3A Interest Groups

Group Coordinator: Bob Andrews - ☎ 01789 763202 bob.andrews679@gmail.com

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 April 2016	John Cooper
Computer	Free email Computer Newsletter (Circulation 40 members)			John Ruffell
Crafts	Usually 3 rd Wednesday	10.00 am	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Linda Bradley
French	3 rd Tuesday	2.30 pm	The Library, Oversley House	Pat White
Garden Lovers	2nd Thursday April – October	2.30 pm	Various (See Page 2)	Judith Wharrad
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	John Watts
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	10.30 am	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
Science	1 st Wednesday	2.00 pm	1 Henley Street	Bill Bayley
Theatre Visits	As Notified			Joe White
Vocabulary Games	2 nd Tuesday	10.00 am	Jubilee Court	Michael Joyce
Yoga on Monday	Every Monday	10.30 am	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Karyl Rees
Midday Yoga	Every Monday	12 – 1.00	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Karyl Rees