

# May

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**



I was sorry to have missed last month's meeting as I understand that the speaker was particularly interesting, and we had over 90 members in attendance.

I also understand that car parking was a problem. I'm afraid there is nothing we can do about the space available at the Jubilee Centre, except ask that, if walking is not a problem, you might find a space at the Greig Hall and walk along the footpath which runs from the corner of the Hall to the Centre where we meet. The trustees of the Hall are looking at the possibility of providing more car parking as we are not the only group which has the problem.

Another solution would be to car share. I've done a quick breakdown of members in different parts of Alcester. I realise not everyone comes to monthly meetings, but we have 24 members in the Pastures/Seymour Road area, 32 on the Throckmorton Road estate and 49 in the main town, leaving out the retirement complexes. 25% of our members come from outside the area.

Please consider this option – perhaps take it in turns to drive to meetings. I would be very sorry if people decided not to come because of parking problems, or that you felt you had to be there half an hour beforehand just to find a space.

As a last resort, you might park behind someone else – after all, the vehicles should be those of members in the hall.



## Monthly Speakers April Meeting

**Gill Stanley**

At least 92 of our members settled down to a most wonderful talk by Ellie Targett whose family were living in Norway at the beginning of World War 2. Her father was passing on useful information to the allies but was eventually captured by the Nazis. However he managed to escape over the mountains to Sweden. Ellie's talk told us about life in Norway in the 1930's and 40's and explained how her father managed to escape. In later years Ellie and her sister followed the route her father had travelled and later she wrote this down and published it as "Another man's shoes."



## May Meeting

We are looking forward to a return visit from Chris Forse. Last year he told us about his travels in America. He had a wonderful selection of photographs from his journeys and they were all accompanied by brilliantly appropriate music. In May he is coming to tell us about his travels in China. It is an event to look forward to.

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

## First Aid Awareness Session



Would you know what to do if one of your loved ones had a fall or choked on a nut? If the answer's "NO", why not come along to a First Aid Awareness session on **Thursday 28th June 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. at Jubilee Court**? This will be a very informal and interactive session with time for you to ask questions and, if you wish, to practise some First Aid skills. A list will be put out at the next meeting on 1st May, but if you won't be at this meeting please contact John or Lyn Pickering on 01527 453628 to put your name on the list. The maximum number of attendees is 12 and the cost will be £3 (based on 10 people attending) to cover room hire, refreshments and materials.

## INTEREST GROUP NEWS

### Garden Lovers



A dozen intrepid garden lovers met in cold wet conditions at Spetchley Gardens. After collecting a map and audio guide we proceeded around the gardens catching information from various audio points about the family history, palladian house, the church and creation of the gardens. Daffodils, scilla, cyclamen and camellia were in full bloom with magnolia, fritillaria, and flowering cherry trees just bursting forth. We could imagine the display of many roses, shrubs and trees later in the year. The peacocks were not enjoying the weather but walking along the edges of the lake swans and coots were nesting. The Horse Pool where the horses drank had a slope for driving the carriages and carts in for a wash. After seeing one of the carriages we finished our day with a visit to The Old Laundry Rooms for much appreciated hot drinks and snacks. I am hoping **our next visit will be to White Cottage at Stock Green on 10 May**. The cost of £7.50 includes refreshments and a talk about the garden.

Janet Allely

### History

Our subject last month was the history of Quakers in British business and industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Quakers numbered just 1 in 500 of the population, but their contribution to trade and industry was enormous. As religious "dissenters" they were barred from universities, & therefore most professions, & also from any official position in local or central government. Business was really their only option, & this they did successfully on very ethical lines, with great respect for their employees. We looked in detail at the three great chocolate producers – Fry, Cadbury, & Rowntree – & the great banking families of Barclay & Lloyd. Also the Darby family & their iron foundries, pioneers of the Industrial Revolution in Coalbrookdale, & the subsequent railways boom. There is a long list of other businesses that most of us did not realise were of Quaker origin.

Gerry Barker



**In May we will be showing a film of British life in the decade after 1945, trying to recover from WW II.**

### Music Appreciation



My programme for April was quite varied and included Debussy's "Arabesque" for guitar, Spohr's Clarinet Concerto No.1, and Pete Seeger's stepmother Ruth Crawford Seeger who composed "Suite for Wind Quartet". Russell Watson sang "Nella Fantasia" from the film "The Mission", we also heard pieces by Elgar, Gershwin, Strauss, Rossini, Borodin and Dvorak and Verdi's overture from "The Force of Destiny" played by The Grimethorpe Colliery Band. **For our next meeting on 30 May**, members will be bringing their own C.D's to share their favourite tracks with everyone.

Jan Rowe

### Philosophy

If I may be allowed to retreat into analogy, so far this year our discussions have been a gentle stroll through the forest of Metaphysics on easy paths & few obstructions at "Mind" " Knowledge" & "Truth" but as we reach the gate of "Belief" we were faced with a warning sign Danger Religion Ahead, Rough uneven ground !! A Belief is accepting a proposition as truth when proof of veracity has not been established, From Galileo to Darwin Newton to Einstein beliefs have been dissolved into truth in spite of staunch defence of the church who remain valiant guardians of Belief. Throughout our lives we rely on everyday beliefs. Standing at a bus stop, picking up a telephone or opening a bank account, we are relying on our belief of the consequence (though perhaps with a varying degree of confidence ? faith) but only on the grounds of probability learned from past experience. Unfortunately in deference to sensitivity, religious beliefs theistic or not are too personal and so heterogeneous as to be outside the parameters of our discussions beyond superficial comparative reference. Though each aspires to the same ideal, the historical trail of both external and internal conflict has sad responsibility for the present unhappy state of the world. Nevertheless we had an interesting and informative discussion and avoided any grave pitfall and left in comparative peace

Adrian Madge



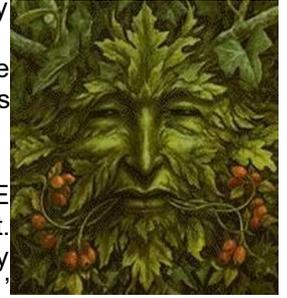
**Our next meeting on May15th is on Philosophical Paradox.**

## Poetry Too

Bob Andrews

In spite of forewarned apologies a small group met to reveal their researches on poetry with 'green' involved in one way or another.

Now the word may conjure up pastures and woods of course, and many such poems were aired, but green may be associated also with 'envy' or 'innocence', or environment as seen through modern eyes.



Many well-known 19<sup>th</sup> century poets featured of course; Christina Rossetti, A E Houseman, Anne Bronte, John Drinkwater and Robert Louis Stevenson were prominent. Rupert Brooke wrote of Grantchester with a mixture of nostalgia and bile whilst in Germany in 1912. D.H. Lawrence was less wordy but still telling. Of modern poets Paul Celan's 'Five senses of green' was particularly effective; Bri Edwards's 'The Color Green' was funny and rhymed refreshingly too. Carol Ann Duffy made an unusual entry with words about her father's death – takes all sorts y'know.

We heard an anonymous piece on the ancient legend of 'The Green Man', lost in ancient folklore a long time ago. Our finish was – surprise – John Milton Hayes's epic 'The green Eye of the Little Yellow God' – , melodrama on wheels; what a way to go!

**Our next meeting will be on 25 May when the subject is "Flight"**

## Pub Ambles

Linda Bradley



April saw the introduction of a monthly repeat walk for the ever increasing numbers in this group. The same walk now takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday & the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, not only relieving the pressure of large numbers turning up for a pub lunch, but also widening the opportunity for members to walk. This month's walk followed a 3.3 mile circular route from the Queen's head Inn at Irons Cross, Salford Priors, along byways & footpaths through open country and orchards. We passed Bevington Hall & Mudwalls Farm, a family farming community based over several hundred acres in the heart of the Ragley Estate, growing & supplying a range of top fruit, stone fruit & veg to the UK market and often to be found on the menus of local pubs & restaurants.

Although a bit wet underfoot in places, the going was not too muddy, despite recent rain & at the finish, a gargantuan carvery was on offer at the Queen's Head for the princely sum of £6.95 including a pud!

## Pub Walks

Trevor Wraight

April and time for our annual ascent of Bredon Hill on a sunny spring day. A warm up through the village of Ashton-under-Hill awash with bright yellows & blues of spring flowers. A slow, steady



ascent through bouncing young lambs & the joyful singing of a variety of small birds. A pair of fallow deer interrupted their grazing to move quietly away. At the top a gentle breeze plus the trilling of skylarks were very welcome. We were not alone. Plenty of walkers were also enjoying the open tops. There was even a queue for 'Derek's' seat. The views were restricted by mist coming up from the valleys but the tops of the Cotswolds were visible as we made the descent for an excellent lunch at the Star following a knee stretching 5.2 miles.

## Rees Reading

Karyl Rees

'Napoleon's Last Island' by Thomas Keneally was a fictionalised account of Napoleon's arrival and stay on St Helena and his relationship with the Balcombe family, in particular young Betsy Balcombe. It is from her point of view that the story is told - how Napoleon and his entourage stay in the Balcombe's summer pavilion while a house is prepared for them further inland on the small, very isolated, island. At first Napoleon is allowed to hold court among the islanders until a change of governor brings firmer control over movement and access. Betsy and family eventually emigrated to Australia where Keneally came across the keepsakes which inspired the book.



## Science

Bill Bayley



At our last meeting we talked about sound, in all its forms. Ultra- sound is used medically (some of us had actual experience), the human ear is extremely complex and it's amazing how it works, and the tuning of an orchestra is more complicated than you would think. Elephants hear through their feet, and whales can communicate over distances of hundreds of miles. These were only some of the facts that came up. Our next session will be on "Light".

## Spanish

**John Douglas**

The new group started at Jubilee Court in January with fortnightly sessions and the improvement in the language since then is noticeable. This session will finish at the end of June and then a break so that we have a chance to use the language in the bars and restaurants of Spain and South America. We are expecting to resume for further improvement in September. Hasta luego!



## TheatreVisits

**Geraldine Thompson**



38 members and friends went to see this steamy revival of Tennessee Williams' classic "A Streetcar Named Desire" at Malvern Theatre. Chelsea Walker's production and designer Georgia Lowe's set, together with lights man Lee Curran and sound designer Giles Thomas, craft some truly breathtaking moments. When Blanche seduces a thoroughly intimidated paper boy, she does so in a burst of disco balls and Blondie. When she confesses her troubled past to Mitch, she does so amid a shower of orange-tinted rose petals and skittish jazz music. When Stanley brutally asserts himself, she holes herself up in a glass-box shower, the set collapsing around her, along with her pretensions. A truly impressive production although somewhat over explicit.

## 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 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	11.00 am	Various Recommencing May 2017	John Cooper
Computer	Free email Computer Newsletter (Circulation 40 members)			John Ruffell
Crafts	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday September to March	10.00 am	Alcester Methodist Ch. Hall	Linda Bradley
French	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	2.30 pm	The Library, Oversley House	Pat White
Garden Lovers	2nd Thursday April – October To be confirmed	2.30 pm	Various	Janet Alleley Kath Lloyd-ajones
History	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10.15 am	The Library, Oversley House	Gerry Barker
Jazz & Big Band Appreciation	2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>nd</sup> Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	10.30 am 10.30 am	Various Various	Linda Bradley Bronwen Bunting
Pub Walks	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.00 am	Various	Trevor Wraight
Rees Reading	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	10.15 am	Various	Karyl Rees
Science	1 <sup>st</sup> 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

