



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England U3A

Website address:-
www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk

Newsletter Editor: **Ron Castleton**, 114 Loxley Road, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 7DS
☎ 01789 205 878 : ✉ ron.castleton@tiscali.co.uk
Membership Secretary: **Brian Bradley**, 7 Appleby Close, Gt. Alne, Alcester, B49 6HJ
☎ 01789-488 551 : ✉ brianbradley@uwclub.net

APRIL 2012 NEWSLETTER

TODAYS SPEAKER

Pam Sutton, the secretary of an organisation called Troop Aid is going to talk to us about this small but vitally important charity which helps injured and returning troops from war torn areas of the world.

NEXT MONTHS SPEAKER

Next month's speaker is an entertainment from 'Skeletons In the Cupboard'. A slightly changed format to the one originally booked to coincide with this year's Diamond Jubilee called 'Rule Britannia'.

From the Chairman's Desk

Two things to mention - the next issue of U3A Matters (formerly U3A News) will be published in April. I have updated the circulation list but if you do not receive your copy by the end of April please let me know.

Wright Hassell & Co, Solicitors, are looking to run a coffee morning for U3A groups at their offices in Leamington Spa at some point over the next couple of months to do a short update on legal matters. Please let me know if you are interested in this and I will get more information."

David Sladden

Courses On-Line from National Office.

Note: There is no charge for Untutored Course access to U3A members. Members will at first need to register at National Office for verification of membership.

National Web Site. www.u3a.org.uk Go to "Create an Account"

A list of the courses may be found on the notice board.

The courses provide interest for an individual, or a self-help group to study the material for a few weeks/months. Research may be done via the library, the internet or using material within the home.

Several courses have been downloaded and saved over the past 2 years.

For more information, please contact Robyn - redbird22@hotmail.co.uk

The China On-liners will be meeting on Wednesday, 11th April, in the Annex from 2.30 – 4.30 pm. We will be discussing our research on Units 4 and 5 which has introduced us to the barbaric practice of foot binding which continued for over 1,000 years and was finally outlawed in 1911.

The Group are planning to visit Compton Verney on Wednesday afternoon, 9th May, where we will be given a conducted tour of the Chinese Collection. Anyone interested is welcome to join us. The cost will be £8.50.

Do contact Robyn for more details.

Robyn Nicoll

Archive Document Pages (Photographs) on Website.

The Document/Photograph Archive section of the website has now been changed to show multi-page documents instead of a collection of single page documents. Members should find it easier and quicker to navigate. If you wish to print a page you may need to specify that only the current page that you are viewing should be printed, not the whole multi-page document.

Edwin Lilly

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Art Appreciation Group



Carmen Pickering very kindly hosted the last meeting when members looked at and discussed their items of interest.

The next meeting will be in Chipping Campden on 20th April at 2 pm at the Gallery of the Guild, to view the 'Feast of Fun' exhibition. Transport by bus or car.

Pat Wood

Bridge Group



The Bridge Group is friendly, sociable, keen to encourage new members and we offer encouragement to "rusty" ex- players. The Group meets every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Side Room next to the kitchen.

For complete beginners, separate introduction to card play is available. You can contact Ann Parker to arrange for introductory sessions.

John Yeomans

Chinwags



Grants opened specially for us again and 16 of us had a delicious but noisy lunch. We discussed whether or not we would be in favour of Scotland leaving the UK and generally we felt it would be a pity in principle and there was doubt whether Scotland could be financially viable on its own. Even if they have the oil revenues for a few more years, oil and gas are likely to run out in the near future. Matters such as the Euro versus sterling, the cost of defence and charges for university courses arose. The question of moving to Greenwich Mean Time plus an hour all year came up, with little sympathy for the objections. It was noted that not all Scots are in favour of leaving the UK.. For March we will have met on 27th and discussed Employment.

Aline Cumming

The Choir



Our weekly sessions are now underway, with an excellent response from over thirty members. Last Friday we started with "California Dreaming", a thoughtful song, in Winter, which we sing in voice parts with melody and responses.

Then to Lennon and McCartney's "Penny Lane" which we thought we knew, but now have been introduced to the nuances that we never noticed!

Stewart guides us along, and introduces humour when we falter! Then our last number, which we finished with a tumultuous cockney type rendering about a big six wheeler scarlet painted London Transport Omnibus.

Tony Griffiths

THE CHOIR Concert "LET'S SING A SONG" - FRIDAY JUNE 15th in the Methodist Church Hall - 2-30-4pm.
Tickets £2-50(inc tea & cake) are now available at main meetings or phone Ruth Grahame or Dorothy Jones.
Come and join us to celebrate the Jubilee . There will be songs from all parts of Britain and beyond.
We'd love to see you and hope it will be a very entertaining afternoon.

Classical Music Group



We met (five of us) at Bridge Cottage to hear a delightful programme from Howard starting with Rachmaninov's Vocalise. We heard the final movements of symphonies by Dvorak (No8), Sibelius (No5), Mahler (No5), Beethoven (No3 Eroica) and Rachmaninov (No 2) which all included themes harking back to earlier movements. Some composers had written four movements but others had found three fitted their ideas better. These were interspersed with Satie's Gymnopedie, an aria (Je dis que rien) from Bizet's Carmen, Beethoven's Romance for Violin played by Isaac Perlman notable for the fine tone of his instrument, and Rhapsody in Blue by Gershwin. The latter was played on the piano and conducted by Leonard Bernstein with the Los Angeles

Philharmonic Orchestra. The first half of the programme was enjoyable and the second half was inspiring to send us on our way. Next month we meet on 10 April, Gwynneth will both host the group and provide the programme.

Aline Cumming

Computer Group at Stratford School.



Requests have been received for a **Digital Camera and Computer Course** to begin after Easter. The proposed starting date will be on **Thursday, April 26th, from 4pm to 6pm**. There will be 6 sessions (2nd and 4th Thursdays) taking us to July 12th. The cost of this course will depend on numbers attending and is anticipated to be approx. £16. Members will need to have photos on their digital camera and a connecting lead with USB plug.

Please sign the form on the notice board table to book a place on this course or contact Ron or Robyn.

Robyn Nicoll

Creative Craft Group



Our March meeting was learning how to work Tunisian Crochet. Most of us managed to get off to a good start and the work grew quite quickly. As this was only a trial run we plan on following up with this project next month. A few of us plan to make several squares, join them together and make a knee blanket. If you would like to learn how to work Tunisian Crochet come along to our next meeting.

Our next meeting will be on April 19th. In the Annex.

Roma Rudd

Card Making Group



On March 23rd 10 members enjoyed a very productive day card making. Lots of these became charity cards. We had sold 20 at Hunscombe Farm shop for Air Ambulance, and we are still keen to reach a total of £50 for Samaritans Purse. Our next meeting will be April 27th in The Annex at 12.15. Do come and join us if you would like to make some cards and learn a new process.

Carolyn Leach

Dinahs

We met at Bella Italia this month, not many of us could make it with holidays and other commitments. An enjoyable meal was had by all; practiced Italian when ordering, however the waitress informed us she was from Spain!!! We chatted about Antiques, viewing and the buying: French students being looked after by one of the Dinah's, hard work but good for the Entente Cordiale.



Going to the Picture House to see live performances from the National Theatre is quite something, no need to travel to London just visit your local picture house.

We next meet on the 3rd April 12.30 at Grants on Sheep Street.

Sylvia Crooks.

Discussion Group



We met on Wednesday 14th March and the topic was Ghost Stories and other unusual happenings. I started off with the Mystic Murder of Charles Walton in Lower Quinton in 1945. It was thought that it might have had something to do with witchcraft, because of the manner of the killing. Apparently "Fabian of the Yard" had a hand in the investigation, but the killer has never been named. Then I mentioned the Turn of the Screw by Henry James, then Payment Deferred by C.S. Forrester and other people had tales to tell, such as the premature burial of the daughter of Clopton House during a plague epidemic.

There won't be a meeting April, because of the complication of Easter. The May meeting will be on 9th May at my house, to celebrate 1 year since we started and it will be a "bring some food" lunch.

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



The Family History Group met on 22 March included two new members. We primarily use the Internet to research using Census returns and birth, marriage and death indexes, and there is always someone on hand to offer encouragement and advice. I also have resources gathered over many years of research which I am happy to share.

The group will next meet on Thursday 26 April at Stratford High School at 3.45pm, followed by meetings on 24 May and 28 June. The cost for next term will be £7.50 which must be paid at the beginning of term. If numbers increase then there will be an adjustment for the following term.

New members are always welcome. I will not be at the April meeting, but there will be friendly faces there so feel free to come along.

Sue Ocock

Grumpy Old Men Group



At the March gathering 20 Grumps took lunch and put forward their pet hates for depositing in Room 101. Robert Chorley opened proceedings with an explanation of the origin of "Room 101" which to the surprise of many was the "Torture Chamber for the Ministry of Love" in George Orwell's "1984" - a room from which no one ever again emerged! His submission for Room 101 was intrusive background music and noise which certainly struck a chord with us Grumps. Other contenders put forward included the letter "F" (an ingenious compilation by Geoff. Bridgewater of examples of unpleasant words beginning with the letter "F"), women who insist on joining mens' organizations, various celebrities such as Clarkson, Neil, Paxman, the odd politician, Planning Officers, the Olympic Games, over familiar "strangers" and the Eurovision Song Contest. The scrapping of the interminable programme previews and trailers on TV and Radio attracted a lot of support but by a unanimous vote the UN Human Rights Council was chosen to be consigned to the Room. Proposed by Jack Isaacson (Grump of the Month), many astonishing facts and figures were revealed about its ineffectiveness, very, very high cost and its membership which includes many countries which deny and systematically abuse their citizens human rights.

Next Meeting - Wed. 18th April. **Venue** - Le Bistrot Pierre.

Subject - Professional Sport - Do the public get value for money and is the money well spent? **Introduced by** Derek Phillips.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



We are working our way through the Instruction Course in the Handbell Ringers Handbook, so no experience is necessary at this stage if you would like to join us. ***We still need more members to fully utilise the two Chromatic Octaves of Hand Bells.*** Do come and join us.

Ron Castleton

History Group



At our March Meeting Harold Pleasance, who had previously spoken to us about his experiences as a Japanese prisoner-of-war, showed us a BBC DVD which told the story of the officers who were imprisoned, and particularly that of Colonel Philip Toosey upon whom the character of Alec Guinness in the film "The Bridge over the River Kwai" was based. The film got many facts wrong – the Colonel did not co-operate with the Japanese Commandant of the camp. 12,000 prisoner did not return home and eventually 265 Japanese were hanged as war criminals. The Japanese commandant Saitoh was spared because of the support of Colonel Toosey.

We shall not meet in April because the scheduled date is Easter Monday so our next meeting will be on Monday 14th May, when we are going to see the film "Hobson's Choice"

Sheela Burchill

Keep Fit Group



Keep Fit is now full and we have started a waiting list.

For more information please ring Mary Palmer or Joy Baylis for further details.

Opera Group



In February we watched the Opera programme from Howard Goodall's Musical Big Bangs series. Starting from the first rather unsuccessful attempts, which have not survived, moving on to Bellini's success with Orpheus in the Underworld. Goodall short excerpts from various operas, including Verdi, Mozart and Wagner, but surprisingly not Puccini. He pointed out the social and political

background to many of the compositions and we saw burnt out opera houses which suffered as a result. He mentioned light opera and musical comedy, Offenbach and Gilbert and Sullivan and believes they can exist side by side with grand opera. His programme inspired me at least to explore a wider field than the usual repertoire. On 28 March we convene in Bridge Cottage again for Donizetti's La Fille du Regiment from the Metropolitan Opera House.

Aline Cumming

Pilates Group



Every Monday at St. Andrew's Parish hall Shottery between 12:15 and 1:15. For more information contact Gill Ganner.

Play Reading Group



Play Reading is not until 29th March this month. See May Newsletter for the Report. Please ring Sylvia if you are interested in coming along.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry Reading Group



We can take one or two more U3A members into the group. We meet at the West End pub, Bull Street, Old Town, on the second Wednesday of every month at 10.0 until 12.0 mid-day. If you love Poetry and would like to pay us a visit to see if this group is for you, please ring Jackie Williams, 01789 841155.

Poetry and Prose Reading Group



Following our trend of seven ages of man, a very small group of us read poems from Thomas Moore, Sarah Teasdale, Hilaire Beloc, Philip Larkin and others. After a tea break we read passages from Charles Dickens to commemorate his bicentennial year. There will be no meeting in April. The next meeting will be 9th May.

Ann Davies

Reading Group - Monday



This month we read Peacetime by Robert Edric. It is set in late summer in 1946: the Wash on the Fenland coast. Into a suspicious and isolated community comes James Mercer, employed in the demolition of gun platforms. He befriends the wife and daughter of Lynch, a soldier soon to be released from military gaol. He also finds himself drawn to Mathias, a German prisoner with no desire to return home, and Jacob, a Jewish concentration camp survivor. Peacetime gradually unravels the human impulses that bind lives. A good read enjoyed by all. This is Robert Edric's 12th novel well recommended.

Sylvia Crooks

Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we read THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA by Philip Roth. This novel was a mix of fact and fiction set in the early 1940's. Our group were divided in their opinions of the novel. One member found it mesmerising and a 'must read'. However another member found it "a tedious slog and a confusing mess of fact and fiction.". Why not read the novel and see what you think.

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group - Friday



We had On The Road by Jack Kerouac –I say we had it but no-one read it. We all started it but quickly decided that the book was dated and suited to much younger readers who saw no problem in swanning around without a job and living off others while drinks, drugs and chasing girls was more important than work.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



Colin Taylor gave us a programme that consisted of 'disaster' songs that should have made us reach for our tissues but made us laugh instead and then amusing songs that we couldn't believe that we actually listened to in the past. Thank you Colin for a programme that was 'different'.

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



Twelve of the group went to The Royal Spa Centre in Leamington one dark evening in February to hear a very interesting lecture by Professor Chris Stringer from London's Natural History Museum on 'The Origin of Our Species', organised by the Warwickshire Geological Conservation Trust. It was quite a complex talk with many interesting facts and illustrations showing how man slowly developed from a relatively small ancient phase in Africa into modern humans. Discoveries are prompting a radical rethink of many of our genetic, physical and evolutionary origins. The Neanderthals, for instance, have been proven not to be the primitives once thought and are actually the early ancestors of the European peoples. We still carry some of their genes!

Geoff Bridgewater

On March 9th we visited Sarehole Mill in Hall Green.

The mill is one of only two surviving watermills in Birmingham. There has been a mill on sight for at least 460 years. It was originally for corn grinding, but has also been used for metal rolling, wire drawing and grinding bones for fertiliser. It has now returned to corn grinding after a huge restoration project. In the past it has been associated with Mathew Bolton and J.R. Tolkien

April 13th Blaenavon World Heritage Centre
May 11th Talk --- 'The Geology of Warwickshire

Sandra Sladden

All Swing and Jazz Group – changed from Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group



Our February meeting was presented by Geoff Harrison, and he chose as his format to play two or three arrangements of the same track but by different Artists. This gave us the chance to listen to the contrasting treatments.

He started with "Jazz Me Blues" played by The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, Count Basie and His Orchestra and by Bix Beiderbecke. We were then invited to choose our favourite treatment, Plenty of differing views were expressed but no blows were exchanged. The programme then continued with renditions of "Stardust", "Muskrat Ramble" and "Indiana" played by such diverse instrumentalists as Wynton Marsalis to Kid Ory. After the interval, (yet more discussion!). We commenced the second half with "Summertime" played by Sidney Bechet, Miles Davis and Louise Armstrong/Ella Fitzgerald. Then came a trio of Blues tracks, "Basin Street, St. Louis and Royal Garden" The programme was **voted** a great success and our thanks go to Geoff. The March meeting will be on Thursday 22nd March in the lounge of the Methodist Church.

Mavis Pickett

Sunday Lunch Group



Just a reminder that there will be no Sunday lunch in April.

The next Sunday lunch will be on the 6 May at the Bistro Pierre, Stratford. Names please to Brian Bradley, Tel: 01789 488551.

Brian Bradley

Our next visit to the Symphony Hall is a Matinee on Wednesday 25th April 2012.



CBSO "British Classics"

Conductor: John Wilson
Clarinet: Michael Collins

Just 2 tickets left!!!

Payment in now due!!!

Elgar Imperial March
Butterworth – Shropshire Lad
Finzi – Clarinet Concerto
Coates – London Calling
Monckton – the Arcadians

Wood – London Cameos
Katelbey – In a Monastery Garden
Farnon – Jumping Bean
Coates – Dancing Nights Waltz
Delius – Hearing the first cuckoo in Spring

This is a very popular programme and will be most enjoyable.

The cost of the visit will be £26. this includes return coach journey and ticket.

Please sign up at the main meeting. or phone Dorothy Jones 01789 204892 to reserve a place. We need to pay for the tickets by February 24th. Send cheques (made out to Heart of England U3A to 14 Ascot close Stratford upon Avon CV37 9FN

Dates for your Diary

Our second Visit to Symphony Hall – **Thursday 28th June 2012** – Matinee Performance. 2.15pm.

“SUMMER SERENADE”

Elgar – Serenade for Strings
Mozart – Sinfonia for violin and viola
Barber – Adagio
Dvorak – Serenade for Strings

Please sign up at the main meeting or phone Dorothy Jones to reserve a place. We need to pay for the tickets by 28th April. Send cheques made out to Heart of England U3A to 14 Ascot Close, Stratford-upon-Avon. CV379FN

Wednesday 22 August 2012 Visit to Tyntesfield

Leaving Henley at 9.00 and the Leisure Centre at 9.30 to arrive at Tyntesfield at 11.30 (We have to have a timed arrival) Leaving for home at 4.30.

Cost For National Trust Members £14.50 for non National Trust Members £25.50.
Names to be taken with money now and May meeting.

Theatre Group



Anne Boleyn - 28 April 2012

All the tickets for this have now been sold and most of the money had been paid. Please note the date is the 28 not 21 as stated in last month's newsletter. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. There is a waiting list if you would like to hope for a seat.

The Lady in The Van - 2 June 2012

All the tickets for this trip have now been signed-up for and the money is due (£28.50).
Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30.

Coral Bradley

Birmingham Old and New

On 18 May 2012 we have an outing going to the Symphony Hall in Birmingham for a guided tour and then on to Aston Hall for another guided tour.

We leave the Leisure Centre at 9.00 and have another pick up at Henley (Johnsons' yard) and on to Birmingham for coffee at 10.30. The tour starts at 11.00 and lasts for an hour and a half. There are plenty of places for lunch in the vicinity you have one hour for this. The coach takes us to Aston Hall to arrive at 2.00 where the next tour takes approx one and a half hour then there is time to explore the grounds or have a cup of tea. Leaving at approx 4.30. The cost is £22.00 which includes both tours, the coach and a tip for the driver.

If you are interested contact Coral Bradley 01789 488 551 or coralbradley@hotmail.co.uk as soon as possible.

Walking Group



We had a very enjoyable five mile walk around the Warwick area visiting the castle, canal and also the river.

THERE WILL BE NO WALK IN APRIL DUE TO HOLIDAYS SO THE NEXT WALK WILL BE WEDNESDAY 9TH MAY 2012. Look forward to seeing you then.

Valerie Redfern

WHAT'S ON – Monthly Meetings at Stratford, Shotton and Dene Valley U3As.

Stratford – 25th Apr, "Why I go topless around town" - Gwen Zanzottera.

Shotton – 1st May, "Laughter ; The Best Medicine" - David Howe.

Dene Valley – 10 Apr., "Working Canal Boat Women." - Mike Miles.

Group	Group Leader	Contact Telephone	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)
All Swing and Jazz Group	Dennis Sully	01789 721 021	4 th Thursday
Art Appreciation	Phyl Collins Pat Wood	01789-266 429 01789-299 860	3 rd Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Tony Badham	01789-772 520	4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm
Bird Watching Group	John Stagg	01789-267 549	See Newsletter for dates
Bridge	John Yeomans	01789-748 197	Every Tuesday 2.30pm
Chinwags Luncheon Group	Aline Cumming	01789-298 357	4 th Monday 12 Noon
Choir	Ruth Grahame Dorothy Jones	01789-267 984 01789 204 892	11.45 for 12 noon, After 2 nd March - Weekly
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	01789-298 357	2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm
Cooks Club	Chris Heaps	01789 550 662	4 th Wednesday
Creative Crafts	Roma Rudd	01789-262 690	3 rd Thursday 2 – 4 pm
Computer Group	Robyn Nicoll	01789-262 186	2 nd Thursday - 4.15 pm
Dinahs Luncheon Group	Sylvia Crooks	01789-416 965	1 st Tuesday for Lunch
Discussion Group	Athena Roderick	01789 551 416	2 nd Wednesday
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock	01789-491 004	4 th Thursday – 4.00 pm
Grumpy Old Men Group	Graham Mitchell	01789-205 195	3 rd Wednesday for Lunch
Hand Bell Ringing Group	Ron Castleton	01789-205 878	Alternate Mondays 10am
History Group	Janet Anslow	01789-295 181	2 nd Monday – 2.0 pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	01789-204 707	Every Thursday am
Luncheon Group – Sundays	Brian Bradley	01789-488 551	- see Newsletter for dates -
Pilates Group	Gill Ganner	01789-269 657	Mondays – 12.15-1.15pm
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	01789-416 965	-see Newsletter for dates -
Poetry Reading	Jacqueline Williams	01789-841 155	2 nd Weds. 10 – 12 am
Poetry & Prose Appreciation	Anne Davies	01789-450 442	As appropriate
Reading Group – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	01789-204 892	3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm
Reading Group – Monday	Phyllis Bailey	01789-262 191	3 rd Monday–2.30-4.30pm
Reading Group – Friday	Coral Bradley	01789-488 551	As appropriate
Rock & Roll Music Group	Coral Bradley	01789-488 551	2 nd Thursday – 2 – 4pm
Science & Nature Group	Geoff Bridgewater	01789-298 059	2 nd Fridays
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins	01789 204 892 01789-299 565	As appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	01789-488 551	As appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	01789-471 048	2 nd Wednesday

Tea Rota for 2012.

January	Computer Group	July	Weds Reading Group
February	Friday Reading Group	August	Classical Music Group
March	Poetry & Prose Group	September	Rock & Roll Group
April	Poetry Reading Group	October	Science & Nature
May	Walking Group	November	Chinwags
June	Play Reading Group	December	Hand Bells Ringers

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please ensure that any copy for the April Newsletter is sent to the Newsletter Editor before 22nd May