



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

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

# Heart of England U3A

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## August 2011 Newsletter

### TODAY'S SPEAKER

Our speaker today is Rob Hemmings who will entertain and inform us about The Regal Cinema and Effects on Peoples Lives, presenting a wonderful snapshot of that most socially important of institutions, the small town picture palace.

### NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

There is no speaker for 1<sup>st</sup> September – it's our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party!!!!

Membership Fees of £16.00 per person become due from 1st September. Renewal forms will NOT be required unless your address, phone number or e-mail address have changed. Envelopes are available at this meeting.

### Important Notice:

Our September meeting will be our 10<sup>th</sup> AGM. Nominations for Officers and Committee for the year 2011/2012 may be submitted in writing to the Chairman or Business Secretary at today's meeting. Nomination forms will be supplied. The present Officers and Committee are:

Chairman	Robyn Nicoll	Retiring.
Vice Chairman and Treasurer	David Sladden	Retiring but available for election as Chairman.
Business Secretary	Aline Cumming	Available for re-election.
Membership Secretary	Brian Bradley	Available for re-election.
Committee	Coral Bradley	Available for re-election.
Committee	Ron Castleton	Available for re-election.
Committee	Anne Davies	Available for re-election.
Committee	Dorothy Jones	Available for re-election.
Committee	Athena Roderick	Available for re-election.
Committee	Sylvia Crooks	Available for re-election.
Committee	Valerie Redfern	Retiring.
Committee	Jackie Williams	Retiring.
Edwin Lilly has been co-opted to the committee to assemble the Archive.		

So far, nominations have been received for the posts of Vice Chairman, Treasurer and an Assistant to the Treasurer.

**More Important Notice:** Straight after the AGM, we will be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday and invite members to attend the party being organised by Dorothy Jones and her team.

### On Line Courses from National Office. –

Proposed new course to begin in the autumn.

“China – an introduction through history, culture and language.”

The course is ideal for group learning with members helping each other. It consists of 10 units which could extend over several months with probably 1 unit covered per month. Members will require access to the internet for research and an e-mail address for receipt of the units in pdf format.

To register for this course, please sign the list on the notice board table adding e-mail address or send an e-mail to Robyn - [redbird22@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:redbird22@hotmail.co.uk) The introduction to the course will be sent to all those interested and the first unit will be e-mailed at the beginning of September.

*(Study the past if you would define the future. Confucius.)*

### **New Opera Interest Group**

The suggestion of an Opera Interest Group met with a small but enthusiastic response so a list will go on the Board to sign. Expect the Group to start meeting in the Autumn.

## **NEWS FROM THE GROUPS**

### **Big Band Swing Jazz Group**



The next meeting of the H of E Big Band Swing and Jazz Group is on Tuesday 30th August 2011 at 2pm in The Lounge, of The Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon. You are welcome to join in with us. We listen to recorded Big Band Swing and Jazz music. We are a very informal and friendly mixed group of enthusiasts. A reminder that our August meeting has been changed from Tuesday 23rd August to Tuesday 30th August.

*Dennis Sully*

### **Bird Watching Group.**



Seven members enjoyed a very successful day out at Kingsbury Water Park on July 5th. Although holidays had depleted the numbers somewhat it proved to be a very pleasant venue for bird watching.

A minibus was organised by Elisabeth Chambers which meant no-one had to drive and the weather was very favourable.

The site is very well organised with several well positioned hides to allow excellent views of the many species present.

New members are always welcome . If interested contact John Stagg.

*John Stagg*

### **Bridge Group**



The Bridge Group is very friendly, very sociable and very keen to encourage new members. Following the life-long learning ethos of all U3As we can offer encouragement to "rusty" ex-players and, for complete beginners, separate introduction card play to get you started.

We meet every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Methodist Hall Side Room 1. Complete beginners can contact Ann parker to arrange for introductory sessions.

*John Yeomans*

### **Chinwags**



We had a pleasant lunch at Grants again on 25th July, discussion ranging widely from the RSC theatre and productions (modern and traditional), Princess Di's wedding dress, holidays, to who we would like to have dinner with (Peter Finch, Rupert Murdoch among others) Our thanks to Gwyn for standing in for June and July. There will be no meeting in August. Next meeting 26 September at Grants, time 12.00 topic 'Could we do without newspapers?'

*Aline Cumming*

### **Classical Music Group**



A smaller group than usual meeting on quite a humid summer afternoon, were soon transported away to the land of make-believe and fairies. Using a superior recording by Deutsche Gramophone, Valma had gone to a lot of trouble to bring us the entire story of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", interspersing music and verse.

A synopsis was read before each act giving the rather complicated story involving the Duke of Athens forthcoming marriage, a group of Athenian craftsmen, two pairs of lovers and the King and Queen of the fairies, with their retinues, including the mischievous Puck.

Then followed the romantic music of Felix Mendelssohn, including the Overture, Scherzo, March of the Fairies, the familiar Wedding March and the Fairy Chorus. The Orchestra was the Boston

Symphony conducted by Seiji Ozawa with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and Soloists. The unmistakable voice of Judy Dench read the verse from Shakespeare's play.

This was a "different" programme from usual, but most enjoyable. Thank you Valma.

*Deidre Gillam*

### **Computer Group At Stratford High School. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays 4pm – 6pm.**



We are planning to introduce a new course after the summer break– “The Key to Computing”. This will be a basic typing course which will introduce members to the keyboard and will be of great help for all future computing tasks. A booklet is being prepared, as practise between sessions is recommended. The starting date and future arrangements are being finalised with the head of IT at the High School. We anticipate starting the typing course in October. To enrol for the course please sign the sheet on the notice board table or contact Ron or Robyn.

*Robyn Nicoll*

### **Cooks Club Group**



As the Groups Meeting in July clashed with the publication date of the Newsletter, the report will be in the next Newsletter.

*Chris Heaps*

### **Creative Craft Group**



The project for our July meeting on the 21st was making a Beadwork Spectacle Chain. Everyone was very industrious and managed to get a lot of the beadwork done but as the project was unfinished, we have decided to continue with the beadwork next month.

Our next meeting will be on 18th August 2011 in the Annex 2pm-4pm.

Everyone will be most welcome to come and join us.

*Roma Rudd*

### **Card Making workshop**



Last Friday the group spent a few happy hours making cards using various methods..The results were amazing and added to our depleted sales stock. The previous week almost all our cards were sold at the Stratford Hospice festival. We were very pleased to contribute £30 to their funds. Our next workshop will be on Sept 2nd.Do come and join us. Call me for details Carolyn.

The equipment for Encaustic Art will be set up at the card making workshop and any member who would like to have a go is welcome to come along. View some samples of cards and pictures on the card sale table.

### **Dinahs**



We met at Church Street Town House on a very humid day in July; we were escorted to a large round table by the open window, which was very welcome. Lots of talking as usual, holidays, Saga holidays, where to buy the cheapest rail tickets; the Picture House, hoping it will stay open in the future when the new proposed cinema complex is built! The food was enjoyed by all, we have booked for next month 2nd of August at the same venue, as we left the rain was most welcome.

*Sylvia Crooks*

### **Family History Group**



Due to the school summer holidays our next meeting will be in September (date to be confirmed). New members are always welcome.

The group usually meets on the third Thursday of the month at Stratford High School at 3.45pm.

We primarily use the Internet to research our Family Histories using Census returns and birth, marriage and death indexes, and there is always someone on hand to offer encouragement and advice on finding those mysterious relatives!

*Sue Ocock*

### **Grumpy Old Men Group**



Another good meal at the Le Bistro Pierre; we have decided to make this our permanent venue for the foreseeable future.

Our discussion on 'whether there was a future for the House of Lords' engendered much debate but no conclusions. All members thought there should be a second chamber, but what that chamber should be called, or how it should be formed and constituted, had as many contradictory ideas and views as there were members present. Views varied from selection by committee chaired by the Queen; election by the electorate; whether to include or ban bishops: on one thing we were unanimous: we did not trust politicians to do the job. One proposition was that we should be governed by a benign dictator. With no definite conclusion, we edged back to leaving things as they are.

Next meeting: Wednesday 17 August. Venue: Le Bistro Pierre at the Swans Nest Hotel, Stratford. Subject: Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing??, introduced and chaired by Robert Chorley.

*Graham Mitchell*

### **Hand Bell Ringing**



We are continuing to enjoy ourselves, and are hopefully making some progress. We are now running in to the Holiday Period and it is not always possible to get a full turnout – but we soldier on!! We are still having trouble getting a good Tape Recorder!!!!

*Ron Castleton*

### **History Group**



At our July Meeting Ursula Russell gave us a talk entitled "The spell of Far Arabia" From 1991 to 1999 Ursula, who was working for the Royal Society of arts Examinations Board, visited Oman three times a year to establish contact with various educational institutions. She gave us a fascinating account of its history – how it was a feudal state until 1970 when the present Sultan; Qaboos Bin Said Al-Said, overthrew his father and has since governed the country as a benevolent despot. The Majority of the people are Ibad Muslims and get on well with their neighbours. In the 1960's the exploration of oil began but it is expected to run out in 33 years time (how can they be so precise?) so the Sultan is anxious to encourage tourism. From slides Ursula showed us the coastal area looks beautiful, with lush vegetation and waterfalls. An interesting country – well worth a visit.

We shall not meet in August but in September we are going to have a talk by Harold Pleasance, who was a Japanese prisoner-of-war.

*Sheela Burchill*

### **"Lets Talk" Discussion Group**



The next meeting will be Wed. Aug 10, 1PM at West End and it will be the postponed topic of Our Town. Meanwhile, I intend to do a recce of Long Marston & points south, to see if I can work out how the proposed rail link will work. Please let me know if you are coming to the meeting, so that I can sort the tables out better. Thanks.

Wed July 13<sup>th</sup> - as there is so much going on in Current Affairs, we decided to discuss 'News Corp' & Murdoch's desire to control far too much. We all deplored our politicians' weakness in allowing Murdoch to gain so much influence over politics & the police. We felt that the closure of the News Of The World was appalling, in making so many people redundant, so that Murdoch's ambitions can go ahead. We don't expect miracles, but we do hope that, now that America has added it's weight to the debate, we will see a cleaning up among the powers that be. We won't be holding our breath, though.

*Athena Roderick*

### **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.

### 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



We met at Sylvia's on the 15th July. We read "Keep Fit Class" a comedy and "Time Being" a ghost story both by Carol Reeve.

Next meeting is on the 12th August. If anyone would like to join us please ring Sylvia Crooks

*Sylvia Crooks*

### Poetry Reading Group



The Group were entertained (I hope) by me with a short account of the poetry of Ben Jonson. I have been intrigued by the contrast between this bear-like, combative man and the delicacy of some of his verse. He could also give vent to his anger and frustration as well but he was notably generous in praise of his mentor, William Camden and contemporaries like John Donne. Not a man to quarrel with, though:

Hornet, thou hast thy wife dress'd, for the stall,  
To draw the custom: but herself gets all.

*Jess Monk*

### Poetry and Prose Reading Group



Our meeting in July was a follow on from a morning of poetry readings by Henry Sandon at Worcester Poetry Festival.

His readings were poems by Noel Coward, John Betjeman and A.E. Housman, and so our readings followed the same format. A most entertaining afternoon.

The next meeting will be on 7th September. No meeting in August.

*Anne Davies*

### Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we chose either an auto biography or biography to read and discuss at our meeting.

Four of us chose well known entertainers two comedians and two singers. Of the four, Michael McIntyre's "Life and Living" and Andy Williams' "Moon River and Me" were not highly rated. Both were deemed to be very me, me, me and more about who they had met as much as what they had achieved. Quite egoistic!

However, Keith Richard's "Life" about his early childhood and his time with the Rolling Stones had been well received by the reviewers and didn't disappoint our reader. Despite having no formal music training his love and appreciation came through and he acknowledges the influence of the black musicians of Chicago playing blues music.

The biography by Pamela Stephenson of Billy Connolly was also highly praised. Again it showed how Billy rose above a poor abusive childhood in the Gorbals to find himself through laughter. Consider to be an easy and interesting read.

From the world of entertainment to Nelson Mandela's "Long Walk to Freedom", a truly inspiring and thought provoking book. Written whilst in prison with much of his writings confiscated by the guards, he managed to smuggle out his original copy. He describes being brought up by the tribe's chief and his family after the death of his father who was an adviser to the chief. Mandela was given a good education



resulting in qualifying as a lawyer. His work with the ANC arose out of apartheid and the pinnacle of his achievements being elected leader of South Africa.

Our final book was Osbert Sitwell's "Left Hand, Right Hand", published in 1945, this volume being the first of four. It details his early life at Renishaw Hall, the family home in Derbyshire and provides memories of those years. His mother's love of flowers and the wonderful smell of them that was always in the house. His father planting the hedges at Renishaw which always seemed to be the same height as himself from being 3 to 17.

Next month we are reading any book by Rose Tremain.

*Sandra Whiteley*

### **Reading Group – Friday**

We read Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea*. This is set in the time of the Irish potato famine and is about a group of people sailing to America to start a new life. The nature of the story means that it goes backwards and forwards in time and can be rather confusing. It also has characters from different social backgrounds and some of the group found the descriptions of the wealthy people far fetched. Some parts of the book are very violent and we questioned the need for this. Overall most of the group liked the book.



We will not meet next month as we all have other commitments but we will have a book, so two books will be discussed at our September meeting at Aline's house on 2 September

*Coral Bradley*

### **Rock & Roll Group**



We had a lively meeting with our usual range of rock & roll music this time with more emphasis on some early tunes.

Next month Tony Whiteley will give us one of his programmes which we know in advance will be enjoyable. New members welcome. second Thursday of the month in the lounge.

*Coral Bradley*

### **Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group**



The next meeting of the Stratford Swingers is on Thursday 25th August at 2pm in **The Annexe** of The Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon. You are welcome to join in with us. We are a very informal and friendly mixed group of enthusiasts.

*Dennis Sully*

### **Sunday Lunch Group**



The next lunch will be on Sunday 7th August at the Golden Cross, Ardens Grafton. The following lunch will be on the 4th September at the Royal Oak, Whatcote. Names please to Brian Bradley, Tel No: 01789 488551.

### **Our next visit to the Symphony Hall is a Matinee on Thursday October 20th.**

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Vassily Sinaisky

Piano: Nareh Arghamanyan

The very popular and interesting programme is:

Rachmaninov

Vocalise

Rachmaninov

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Elgar

Symphony No 2.

The cost of the visit is £26. - this includes the coach and matinee performance.

We will leave Henley at 12.00 and Stratford Leisure Centre at 12.30.

We need to pay for the tickets by 28th August.

*Programme Notes: Elgar claimed that his 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony mourned the death of a King – but it's a lot more personal than that. From majestic opening to sunset finish, Elgar's 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony is one of romantic music's great emotional voyages, and a special passion for Bolshoi Theatre music director Vassily Sinaisky. But it goes without saying that he's got Rachmaninov in his blood. Expect glittering playing from the young Armenian virtuoso Nareth Arghmanyan in the ever popular, super romantic "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini".*

Please sign up at the meeting or phone Gwyn Bevins or Dorothy Jones.

Please send cheques to Dorothy Jones.

### **Theatre Group & Outings**

Our trip to Malvern to see the "Syndicate" will go ahead, I have ordered the tickets so now everyone who put their names down will have to pay!

Saturday, 27 August 2011. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30 The cost is £40.00.

*Coral Bradley*

### **Outing**

The trip to Hardwick Hall is 5 August . The coach will leave the Leisure Centre at 9.00 and Henley at 9.15.

***Your National Trust card will be checked on the coach before we will be allowed in. Anyone without their card will have to pay the full entry price.***

We are planning to leave Hardwick Hall at 3.30 and to be back in Stratford at 5.30.

*Coral Bradley*

### **Walking Group**



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at 10.am. Prompt and starts in the neat little estate village of Combrook (Combroke) situated in a secluded valley. This is a just over four mile walk in beautiful Warwickshire rolling countryside.

We can park by the church which is the beginning of the walk please park close together. I recommend good walking shoes and also bring a drink with you. Look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

*Valerie Redfern*

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

**Stratford–31st August - "Bus across the Andes" - Nicholas Clark.**

**Shottery – 6th September - "Fun with clay" - Annette & John Christophers.**

**DeneValley –.9th August - "21st Century Flyers." -The RAF Presentation Team.**

Group Leaders Contact List		
Group	Group Leader	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)
Art Appreciation	Phyl Collins Pat Wood	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Dennis Sully	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 2 – 4 pm
Bird Watching Group	Dorothy Jones	???
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.30pm
Chinwags Luncheon Group	Aline Cumming	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday 12 Noon
Choir	Tony Griffiths	11.45 for 12 noon, Fortnightly
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 2.30 pm

Cooks Club	Chris Heaps	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday
Creative Crafts	Roma Rudd	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday 2 – 4 pm
Computer Group	Robyn Nicoll	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday - 4.15 pm
Dinahs Luncheon Group	Sylvia Crooks	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday for Lunch
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday – 4.00 pm
Grumpy Old Men Group	Robert Chorley	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday for Lunch
Hand Bell Ringing Group	Ron Castleton	Alternate Mondays 10am
History Group	Janet Anslow	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday – 2.0 pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday am
“Let’s Talk” Discussion Group	Athena Roderick	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday
Luncheon Group – Sundays	Brian Bradley	- see Newsletter for dates -
Pilates Group	Gill Ganner	Mondays – 12.15-1.15pm
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	-see Newsletter for dates -
Poetry Reading	Jess Monk	2 <sup>nd</sup> Weds. 10 – 12 am
Poetry & Prose Appreciation	Anne Davies	As appropriate
Reading Group – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 2.30 pm
Reading Group – Monday	Phyllis Bailey	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday–2.30-4.30pm
Reading Group – Friday	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Rock & Roll Music Group	Coral Bradley	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday – 2 – 4pm
Science & Nature Group	Geoff Bridgewater	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fridays
Stratford Swingers	Dennis Sully	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins	As appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

#### TEA ROTA - 2011

<b>August</b>	<b>Bridge Group</b>
September	Creative Crafts Group
October	The Choir
November	History Group
December	Pilates Group

#### Important Note from the Newsletter Editor to all Group Leaders

*I would like to remind you that due to our printers requirements, I need to have your copy for the Newsletter 10 days before the General Meeting.*

*I thank you in advance for your co-operation.*

*Ron Castleton – 01789-205 878*