



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

# Heart of England U3A

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

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## December 2010 Newsletter

### *Have a very Merry Christmas!*

#### TODAYS SPEAKER

Today we are going to be ably entertained by John Edgar who will give us a storytelling afternoon. John has worked in education, has written for the theatre, corporate film and BBC Radio as well as being a performer and storyteller.

#### NEXT MONTHS SPEAKER

6<sup>th</sup> January 2011 starts with an intriguing talk and slide show of Saturn, Lord of the Rings, perhaps the strangest planet in our solar system.

**Membership Fees: Members are reminded that the fee of £15.00 per person is now overdue.** Renewal forms and envelopes will be available at the meeting, and payment should be made at the meeting today or by post to the Treasurer, David Sladden, 10 Saffron Walk, Stratford CV37 6GN **REMEMBER TO GET YOUR 2011 DIARIES NOW!!!!**

#### On Line Courses from National Office. –

A list of the courses is on the notice board. More details can be obtained by visiting the National Office web site - [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)

Please contact Robyn if you would like more information about the courses.

The Garden History Group will be enjoying a slide tour of Stowe Park at their November meeting presented by Richard Morris who visited there recently. Richard's photos illustrate the unit being researched by the on-liners covering the Landscape Gardening movement of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. There will not be meeting in December.

#### NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS.

Our Old Website ceased to function on 31<sup>st</sup> October due to BT changing the website supplier. Our New website, IS NOW FUNCTIONING AT [www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk](http://www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk). Any enquiry to the old website should be referred to the new site.

#### Christmas Raffle:

***Please support the Christmas Raffle and Craft Table organised by the Creative Craft Group. All the proceeds will be donated to the Aylesford Unit at Warwick Hospital, the specialist unit for the treatment of all types of cancer, where one of our Craft Group members has been receiving treatment for the past 6 months.***

***First Prize is the knitted Nativity scene produced by members and there are 2 other prizes.***

#### Heart of England U3A Archive

*I have been asked to set up and maintain an archive of material from the last ten years of operation and to continue to collect material in the future. At the moment we are anticipating that the archive will be mainly paper based - photographs, reports, programmes, menus, newspaper or magazine*

reports. These will be kept in a large folder (or series of folders) and brought to the monthly meetings for members to view. It may be possible, eventually, to view images of the archive on a website.

If you have material from previous meetings, events, etc., I would be pleased to have copies or originals. If you do not wish to relinquish originals I would be able to scan them and make copies so that you can retain either the originals or have copies.

Please contact me on 01789 204472 or by email at [edwinandelaine.lilly@virgin.net](mailto:edwinandelaine.lilly@virgin.net). My address is 9 Addison Drive, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7PL should you wish to deliver items or I can collect.

I have already received digital photographic images from the Science & Nature Group and from the Walking Group and look forward to other groups providing further items in the near future.

Edwin Lilly

**Committee and Interest Group Leaders Get-together :** Thanks to all the Group Leaders and their members who, for the past 2 ½ years, have willingly volunteered to serve afternoon tea at monthly meetings. (an essential part of the afternoon.)

Group Leaders agreed to continue the scheme to share the task and the Tea Rota is now filled to the end of 2012. Thank you Art Appreciation for starting off the new Rota in November, followed by the Grumps in December.

Interest Groups chosen to select two volunteers will be advertised in the newsletters.

**January-** Garden History On-liners.

**February-** Reading Group Monday.

**March-** Sunday Luncheon Group.

The full list for the next 2 years is on the notice board.

If there are any members who do not attend Interest Groups and who would be willing to volunteer to help with the Tea Rota, please sign the "PLEASE HELP" list on the notice board table.

**Several Interest Groups have spaces** including: Art Appreciation, Grumpy Old Men, Monday Reading, Poetry and Prose Appreciation, Sunday Luncheon (more Men please), Creative Crafts, Classical Music, Family History, Chinwags, Play Reading. Interest Group Leaders welcome enquiries.

2 Groups have decided to discontinue due to lack of numbers: Scrabble and With Great Pleasure.

Next get-together will be in May 2011.

#### **NEW YEAR LUNCH**

**Heart of England U3A** has arranged to celebrate the **New Year** at **Le Pierre Bistro in the Garden Room of the Swan's Nest Hotel** on Saturday 22nd January 2011 at 12.00 noon. The price is an amazing £12.00 for a delicious 3 course lunch, not including wine or coffee, which can be ordered separately. There will be a **FREE** draw for a **lunch for two** at Le Pierre Bistro and we will also have another prize for the winner of a short fun quiz. The booking form and menu choice is available at this meeting or can be downloaded from our website. Please return your menu selection to Athena Roderick at the next meeting or to 17 Gifford Walk, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 9LN, Tel No 01789 551416 and send your cheque for £12 each (Made out to Heart of England U3A) to David Sladden, 10 Saffron Walk, Stratford CV37 6GN

#### **NEWS FROM THE GROUPS**

##### **Proposed new Interest Groups:**

Cooks' Club, Knitting Group, Bird Watching, and Italian Art 1400-1600 (an On-Line Course suitable for beginners). Another Interest Group proposed for the New Year is a practical Art Group.

If interested in any/all of these groups, please sign the lists at the notice board table.

If unable to attend the monthly meetings but wish to add your name to the lists, please contact Dorothy Jones or Jackie Williams.

### Art Appreciation Group



Members met at Carmen's home where she gave an informative and entertaining talk on Cartoons and Caricatures - starting with Greek pots!

The group are looking forward to sharing a Christmas lunch date with the Latin group in December at the new RSC theatre restaurant.

January's meeting is on 21st at Barbara's house when each member has been asked to contribute three questions on any aspect of art and to discuss future plans for the year.

*Pat Wood*

### Big Band Swing Jazz Group



Our next meeting is on Tuesday **14th December 2010** at 2pm in The Lounge of The Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon.

*Dennis Sully*

### Bridge Group



The Bridge Group meets every Tuesday afternoon from 2.30 to 4.30 in the Side Room next to the kitchen. We call it Social Bridge and the atmosphere is "relaxed"!

*John Yeomans*

### Chinwags



We met at the Greek Med restaurant, the last lunch before Christmas and talked rather more cheerfully about pleasurable holidays, in Zambia, Israel, Norway, and elsewhere, how well travelled we all are! We were treated to mince pies. We are not meeting in December but are discussing a new venue for January. To avoid the HofE U3A New Year Lunch we shall exceptionally meet on 5th Monday which is 31st January 2011, note for your diaries. More about the venue will be in the January newsletter

*Aline Cumming*

### Classical Music Group



In October we enjoyed Aline's presentation using a DVD on The Art of Conducting. Aline told us that conducting as we know it started to develop in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. We enjoyed seeing so many conductors and their methods and approaches to music. This was just Part One. Part Two comes next month on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December at 2.30 in THE ANNEX.

After tea and biscuits we were treated to Brahms 4th Symphony on DVD. This music was conducted by Sir Simon Rattle and was recorded by the Berlin Philharmonic in 2007. Sir Simon's control of the orchestra was fantastic to watch. Sometimes just a slight facial signal was enough! Thank you Aline, an informative and enjoyable afternoon. The second programme from Aline will be on Tuesday 14 December at 2.30 pm in the Annexe.

*Jean Frick*

### "The Choir"



We had a crowded room of Singers (well over 10) last Friday, and have settled down to a new pattern with our Musical Director Stuart Wallace, who with a light baton manages to harness our enthusiasm with humour and patience!

Before Stuart arrives we do warm-up exercises, which must sound odd to other users but have several members who get us going. Stuart has been with us twice and has given us four-part harmonies – the first was "The Lords Prayer" and then "Someone to watch over me" (Gershwin) and we welcome the professional touch that gets us to sing in harmony.

Next time we expand for a session in the annexe with its pianola!

*Tony Griffiths*

### An Ode to Tony - a Plea from the Heart

Oh find us a Musical Director  
We're singing and having such fun  
We've done breathing and scales and  
Folk Songs, Rounds and things we'd begun.

So Tony was ringing and writing  
Trundling off on his bike  
And vainly attempting to please us  
With someone who we would like

Then out of the hat came Wallace  
(no, not the Lion at the Zoo!)  
But a talented young man with Piano and song  
He'll teach us just what to do.

*Suzette Pullen*

### **Computer Group At Stratford High School.**



**Still time to enrol for the "Cameras and Computers" Course to begin on January 13<sup>th</sup>.**

This course will cover computer applications for digital photography and will include movie/video making. Please sign the list on the notice board table if interested in joining this course or contact Ron or Robyn.

*Robyn Nicoll*

### **Creative Craft Group**



At our November meeting we made more Christmas decorations for our December sales table. This time we made mini trees from fir cones. Although we said it ourselves they turned out to be very pretty!

There will be an opportunity to buy these fantastic creations next month.! Afterwards we arranged out schedule for 2011 when any new members would be welcome

*Carolyn Leach*

**Card Making workshop** The first Card Making workshop in 2011 will be held in the annex on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January from 12.30pm to 4.30pm. "Recycling" will be the theme for the day.



Carolyn is very pleased to inform you that the card stall at the Christmas Bazaar on 6<sup>th</sup> November made a contribution of £32 to this very successful event, organised by Sheila Giles to raise funds for the Church's Redevelopment Scheme.

*Carolyn Leach*

### **Dinahs**



We met this time at the New Inn, Clifford Chambers, where Dinah's started over 2years ago. There were only 6 of us as Rety and Pat were not well and Sylvia was in Venice. We talked about the National Trust, should it try to buy up all of the lovely old houses that need care and attention or should it have representative houses in all areas of the country and concentrate on doing more for fewer houses, grounds and coastlines etc. On the whole, we favoured the latter view, with perhaps some exceptions. We also talked about how careful one needs to be, before paying a great deal of money when buying goods. A trawl around websites seems to have saved some of us "a lot of dosh".

Our next get together will be Tuesday December 7th at the college for our Christmas Meal.

*Athena Roderick.*

### **Family History Group**



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



We primarily use the Internet to research our Family History 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!

There is no meeting in December so our next meeting is in January. New members are always welcome.

*Carol Styles*

### Grumpy Old Men Group



"Does society gain or lose from the current "me" generation." The subject was introduced and the discussion expertly led by (Grump of the Month) Paul Burley whose interrogative style ensured that there was never a pause to the contributions from the assembled throng.

Generally it was felt that society at large had lost out through the "I'm alright Jack/what's in it for me" philosophy and the expectation of getting more and more for less and less. Numerous suggestions were put forward for the root causes of this malaise from the emphasis on consumerism, loss of the art of socializing as we are a more stay at home society, the growth of Facebook/Twitter "friends" who are not real physical people, the lowering of standards in ethics, morals, the respect for others and the down turn in religion etc., etc. However, all is not lost as even with the current very pronounced "me" culture it was felt that human nature hadn't basically changed and ours is still very much a caring society.

**Next Meeting** - WED.15th DEC. same time and place.

**Subject** - WOULD YOU WANT TO BE 18/20 AGAIN. Introduced by David Grahame.

*Graham Mitchell*

### Hand Bell Ringing



We had a second meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November (the first one on our own!!) and had a very successful and we hope tuneful meeting, recapping on the tuition provided by Sandra Maizels at our last meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Sandra very kindly broke into her holiday on a Narrow Boat at Warwick to come over to give us some first class instruction. Our next step is hopefully to progress from Flip Chart Music to individual sheets.

*Ron Castleton*

### History Group

Tony Whiteley transported us (on a dreary, wet Monday afternoon) to New South Wales. So the tale of John Buckley's restaurant (Sorrento, Australia) unfolded with the numerous adventures skilfully pieced together by Tony. Don't forget Christmas Lunch – give Tony a ring.

I am sure there is somebody who will volunteer to do future write-ups for the Newsletter – give Janet Anslow a ring.

*Suzette Pullen*

### 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.

### Outings

*Please think about what outing you would like next year. There is a box for suggestions at the front of the hall names not necessary. All ideas will be considered by the committee. **We want to arrange the outings you would like.***

*Coral Bradley*



### 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 on 5<sup>th</sup> November and thoroughly enjoyed a short comedy brought along by Brian. As some of you know I shall be moving to Evesham soon, so Dorothy Jones – 01789 204 892 – will continue to co-ordinate. Gwyn has kindly offered to host play reading at her home for the present time. Thanks to everyone, it has been good fun.

*Suzette Pullen*





### **Poetry & Prose Group**

November's meeting proved a truly interesting afternoon with poets from the eighteenth century including Byron, Austey, John Clare, Shelley, Swift, Voltaire. What a diverse range of poems we had to read. A very entertaining afternoon.

Next month's meeting will be on December 8th at 2.00pm.

*Ann Davies*

### **Reading Group - Monday**



The Book we read this month was the Conjuror's Bird by Martin Davies. Most of us enjoyed this book, a well written book with many surprises, especially the ending. The story is about love and greed and also a detective type novel: tracing the history of the Mysterious Bird of Ulieta, a creature once owned by the great 18<sup>th</sup> Century naturalist Joseph Banks.

*Trisha Fairhurst*

### **Reading Group – Wednesday**



Due to the Stratford Library closure we were without our reading box and so this month was free choice. What a variety we brought to share. Jilly Cooper's Pandora raised a few eyebrows and although it had good reviews from reputable critics it was not to be recommended. Too many characters of little relevance and plots that took in too many locations and variations. Not even a bargain at only £2 from the Hospice Shop! The other authors and books we discussed fared much better and some of these had been bargain buys as well.

It was interesting to hear about Shadowlands, the poignant, beautiful written book about the true love story of C.S. Lewis and Joy Davidson. Tracey Chevalier's Remarkable Creatures, the true story of Mary Anning and Elizabeth Philpot who uncovered fossils of an unknown creature in Lyme Regis which challenged ideas about the world's creation and debate over our origins. Sarah Dunant's In the Company of the Courtesan, fact based fiction, took us to 16th century Rome and then Venice and the world of the high class courtesan Fiammetta and her dwarf business partner and companion Bucino.

Finally we discussed Michael Morpurgo's Private Peaceful, a book written for teenagers to inform them via three farm boy veterans of the senselessness of WW1.

The short story was one of innocence, love, courage and cowardice of loyalty and friendship. Our afternoon reading group was a very pleasant one.

*Sandra Whiteley*

### **Reading Group – Friday**



We read Perdita: Mrs Robinson by Byrne. This is a biography of Mary Robinson who lived at the time of George III. She was married at fifteen, became a famous actress, was a mistress of the future George IV and then reinvented herself as a poet and novelist. It is a very long book and is repetitive. Mary Robinson was completely self absorbed. She was said to have been a beautiful woman and she lived up to this and spent money that she did not have so was constantly trying to get her old suitors to bale her out. Think of any celebrity of today that the media is besotted with and treble it that, was the life of Mary Robinson

*Coral Bradley*

### **Science & Nature Group**



On November 19th we visited the Hook Norton Brewery after having an enormous lunch at the Pear Tree Inn in Hook Norton village.

The brewery was founded in 1849 by John Harris and it still run by his descendants.

The amazing brewhouse is 7 stories high with many steep staircases. On the ground floor is a unique brass steam engine which was installed in 1899.

11 beers are made with the same natural ingredients (but with variations of recipe), malted barley, hops, yeast and barley.

We saw the brewing process from the grist mill through the masher, fermentation and the beer being racked in the casks. After this we visited their museum and then we could sample as many of the beers as we could drink ! As we left we were each given a Hook Norton Brewery pint glass.

On the 10th December we are having our Christmas Social at Hampton Lucy Village Hall at 2pm.

*Sandra Sladden*

### **Shakespeare Group**



Richard III - this play completes the series of eight plays Shakespeare wrote about the York/Lancaster struggles, the First and Second Tetralogies. It was written in about 1592, before the formation of the Lord Chamberlain's Men (1594). It is anybody's guess (sorry, scholarly estimate) exactly what Shakespeare was doing at this time; whom he was writing for, whose company he was in, or if he was simply freelance.

Richard is a self-confessed villain and glories in it but Shakespeare cleverly stays just this side of caricature (unlike some actors!). The play takes place over two years, from the death of Edward IV in 1483 to the defeat of Richard at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485.

*Jess Monk*

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



Our next meeting is on Thursday **16th December 2010** at 2pm in The Lounge of The Methodist church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon.

*Dennis Sully*

### **Sunday Lunch Group**



The next Sunday lunch will be on the 5th December at the Henley Golf Club.  
There will be no lunch group in January.

*Brian Bradley*

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY** - Next Symphony Hall Concert - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 – 2.15pm  
CBSO conducted by Hannu Lintu with Angela Hewitt, Piano  
Liszt Les Preludes  
Beethoven Piano Concerto No 1  
Dvorak Symphony No.9 (From the New World)

Please sign up as soon as possible as it will be a very popular concert.

COST £26 . This includes concert ticket and return coach to Symphony Hall.

Cheques made out to HEART OF ENGLAND U3A Please send to Dorothy Jones 14 Ascot Close  
Stratford upon Avon CV37 9FN Telephone 01789 204892 **All payments by January 31st.**

*Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins*

### **Theatre Group & Outings**



We go the Birmingham Hippodrome on 4th December to see the Ballet Cinderella. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. We must leave on time as Birmingham will be very busy at this time. My mobile for this day only is 0781882020.

No news yet for any programme in the New Year - watch this space.

*Coral Bradley*

### **Walking Group**



The November walk will take place on Wednesday the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010 at 10.a.m. We have done the walk and it is just too muddy to be safe so we have decided that we will take the safe option and walk part of the greenway and have a pre Christmas coffee at the railway carriage on our return.

We will park in the Greenway car park off the seven meadows road and start the walk from there. I do recommend good walking shoes it was very muddy today albeit that the sun was shining. Look forward to seeing you there.

Yours sincerely *Valerie Redfern*

### **COUNTRY DANCING with Stratford U3A**

Another good session was held at the last meeting and much progress achieved in the new dances, instilling confidence in our ability to attempt more complex pieces.

New members are always welcome to come along and enjoy the fun.

Our next and last session of the year is to be held in the ANNEXE on Tues. 7<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30 p.m.

Dates for the year 2011 are available at the next monthly meeting of the U3A and at each dance session.

Contact: Joyce Curtis on 01789-205283.

### **CYCLING with Stratford U3A**

We are still going strong and beating the bad weather on the way home. One only cancellation has occurred because of "Willy The Wind" and the threat of heavy rain. This was all to the good however as we appreciate the exercise in the fresh air and the rural ambience enjoyed by us riders.

More new "members" are welcome; there is no restriction on numbers.

John Curtis 01789-205283

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

***Stratford – 15<sup>th</sup> December- "Christmas Social".***

***Shottery – 7<sup>th</sup> December - "Social Event" – Shottery members only.***

***Dene Valley – 7<sup>th</sup> December - "John Newton and Amazing Grace"- David Crout.***

<b>Group Leaders Contact List</b>		
<i>Group</i>	<i>Group Leader</i>	<i>Usual Meeting date (Monthly)</i>
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
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.30pm
Chinwags Luncheon Group	Aline Cumming	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday 12 Noon
Choir	Tony Griffiths	12 noon, Fortnightly
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 2.30 pm
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	Carol Styles	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday – 4.00 pm
French Conversation	Anthea Dodsworth	Every Tuesday 1.30 pm
Gardening Group	Dorothy Bonham	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday
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
Luncheon Group – Sundays	Brian Bradley	- see Newsletter for dates -
Pilates Group	Gill Ganner	Mondays – 12.15-1.15pm
Play Reading	Suzette Pullen	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday 10.30 – 12.00
Poetry Reading	Jackie Williams	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	As appropriate
Shakespeare's Life & Works	Jess Monk	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 10.00 am
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



