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January 2012 Newsletter

HAPPY NEW YEAR

TODAYS SPEAKER

Tony Boullemier is going to talk to us about his book called 'Leonie and the Last Napoleon', which I understand is about a distant ancestor of his.

NEXT MONTHS SPEAKER

The speaker for February is Roger Hailwood whose talk is entitled New Zealand, Volcanoes and Hot Springs

On Line Course from National Office.

A list of the free untutored courses available to members may be found on the notice board. Units for these courses are sent to members via e-mail. 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.

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

Reminder for the China Group: We will be discussing our research on Unit 3 on Wednesday, 18th January from 2.30 to 4.30 in the Side Room.

Robyn Nicoll

The Mystery of the Wandering Lampposts.

Are there any historian sleuths in U3A? Someone itching to write a good story? Anyone who thinks this might be a worthwhile project which could involve local members of our U3As and add to Stratford's history?

For years, I just accepted the old lampposts along Waterside as a quaint part of the street architecture, until one day I discovered their individuality and the plaques which indicated that they had been donated to Stratford from other cities and countries. Then they disappeared for a few years. 40 are now back and newly painted in colours that correspond to their original donor towns. Unfortunately a few could not be reinstalled and have been "lost".

It was on the late 1980's/early 1990's that some enterprising man at Warwickshire County Council had the idea that, as we have so many foreign visitors, he would contact places overseas to see if they would be interested in donating a typical street light from their town or city, which could be installed near the theatre. The uptake apparently was very high and this then developed into contacting local authorities from this country, who were also very interested.

There are about 600 U3A members in Stratford. Some may have links with the towns from where the lampposts came and therefore be willing to investigate their history, such as, their original sites, age, design, maker and how/why they were sent. Archive hunters may discover stories about the missing ones? Even the modern day maintenance is an interesting subject. I can't do it, but I thought somebody might like a challenge?

Elka Standen 01789 296930-

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Art Appreciation Group



Our meeting in December was a lunch at The Opposition which was very popular and sparked off a lot of discussion though maybe not much about Art! Our next meeting on January 20th will be at Phyl's house to watch the second half of the programme on 20th Century British artists, and discuss next year's activities.

Phyl Collins

Big Band Swing Jazz Group



The report of the Big Band Swing & Jazz Group Meeting on Tuesday 22nd. November.

The meeting started with a brief introduction by the new group leader, Tony Badham, followed by a varied programme including tracks by great trumpeters such as Luis Armstrong & Bobby Hackett set against the likes of the Modern Jazz Quartet, Stephane Grappelli & Ken Colyers Jazz Men. In all, 20 tracks were played & discussed, with a halfway break for tea & biscuits (essential). Next meeting will be on 13th. December 2011.

Tony Badham

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



There was NO Chinwags in December so see you all again on 30th January (the 5th Monday to avoid the New Year Lunch on 21st January).

Aline Cumming

The Choir



This Monday we sang for the History Group, who joined in the carols and ones we hadn't sung this year! We all had a great time and today is our Christmas Party where we shall sing first and then eat, drink and be merry!

Our "phase two" is exciting – probably singing every week and new pieces for possible concerts in the New Year.

A happy Christ to all from "The Choir".

PS Our second successful Christmas buffet was thoroughly enjoyed by all with especial thanks to Dorothy, Ruth and Sylvia our mainstay trio!.

Tony Griffiths

Classical Music Group



Deidre brought us a cheering selection of Christmas music starting with a series of passages from Handel's Messiah performed by the Gabrielli Consort and Players on authentic instruments, with Paul McCreech. It was enjoyable to hear some of the parts that are not normally played on Classic FM, from 'Behold a Virgin shall conceive' to 'Glory to God in the Highest'. This was followed by the concert suite from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker played by the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Von Karajan and we were swept away to the King's court with the dancers. Then we heard a recorder played as it should be by the Danish player Michala Petri, with the Westminster Abbey Choir and National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Martin Meary. In Corelli's Christmas Concerto, and two traditional carols. After tea and mince pies we experienced Kiri Te Kanawa singing White Christmas and three other carols in her lovely voice. The Cambridge Singers and City of London Sinfonia directed by John Rutter performed some of his own carols and we were sent home with Silent Night. A perfect introduction to the Season, thank you Deidre.

On January 10th we are back in the Lounge for a Bring Your Own session.

Aline Cumming

Computer Group at Stratford School . (Formerly Stratford High School)



Our first course under the new arrangements at the school has been successful and we will be continuing in the New Year with a course of 5 sessions - ideal to “**Brush up on the Basics**”.

We will be starting this course on **Thursday 26th January, 4pm to 6pm.** and will be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in February and March.

Handouts will be provided and several members volunteer to give one-to-one help.

Members are welcome to bring lap tops.

We hope to keep the cost for the course minimal, therefore need to have bookings in advance.

Depending on numbers attending, we anticipate the course to cost approximately £18.

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

Robyn Nicoll

Creative Craft Group



We had a good turnout for our December meeting. Some of us made Christmas decorations for the tree whilst others finished of the stars they started last month.

Our next meeting brings us into the New Year. 19th January 2012. In the Annex 2pm-4pm. When we will be discussing our projects for the coming year.

The Creative Craft Club Christmas Raffle made a good £40 which went to the Warwickshire Association for the Blind. First prize of Name the Knitted Witch was won by Gill French with the name Jennifer and second prize of a box of biscuits was won by Estelle Kiefert with the name Laura.

The Witch was knitted by Sheila Ritchie and the biscuits donated by Robyn Nicoll. Many thanks to you both.

Roma Rudd

Card Club



On Friday 25th November, 10 members spent an enjoyable day making Christmas cards. These were made by the stamping method. The results can be seen at the monthly meeting when they will be available at the Sales table.

Caroline Leach

Dinahs



The Vintner was our venue for Xmas lunch in December. We were made welcome and shown to a round (well a round with square corners!!) table. Ordered drinks, lots of chatting, have not seen each other for a month; about what, and where, we were doing and going over the Xmas Season. Some politics thrown in, can't avoid it these days: we must keep our eyes on the politicians and not let them rule our lives completely!!

We meet at the Opposition on Sheep Street 3rd of January.

Dinahs wish you all a Happy and Healthy 2012

Sylvia Crooks

Discussion Group (changed from Lets Talk)



We were a merry band on Wednesday & chatted about Christmas memories & family matters in general. We couldn't resist ending with an exchange of views on 'The European Problem'. No conclusions, just a lot of concern. We rounded off with warm mince pies, which were lovely. The next get together will be January 11 at the West End - 1PM.

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



The group met on 15 December and shared a room with the computer group which worked well.

As Stratford High School now charges for rooms it has been decided that we will, in future,

share the room for one of the computer group's sessions each month. To fit in with the computer group the FHG will now meet on the fourth Thursday. The next FHG will be on Thursday 26 January.

Group members will need to pay in advance for each term with the cost dependent upon how many members "sign up". The maximum cost will be around £9 per term (ie 3 sessions).

Sue Ocock

Grumpy Old Men Group



The pre-Christmas gathering attracted 18 Grumps and a jolly time was had by all as favourite nursery rhymes, ditties, limericks and humorous poems were recited. Grumpiness was absent throughout the proceedings to such an extent that a change of Group name could have been on the cards. Extraordinary feats of memory were demonstrated by some as verse after verse was spoken without reference to any notes. Keith Riste (one of our younger members!!) showed his prowess in this respect and was awarded not only Grump of the Month but also the coveted mystery prize for his efforts.

As 2011 draws to a close I feel it is appropriate to record the Grumps appreciation to the staff of Le Bistro Pierre for the excellent food provided and the welcome they give to us which ensures our meetings are always enjoyed.

Finally as Group Leader I wish to thank all members for their support (in particular Brian Bradley, our communications supremo) and the many and varied contributions to our discussions without which our meetings would not succeed. Roll on 2012!

Next meeting - Wednesday 18 Jan. 2012. **Venue** - Le Bistro Pierre.

Subject - What if Guy Fawkes had succeeded? - **Introduced by** Leslie Page. **Chairman for the Day** - Derek Phillips.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



This month we are continuing to play from, to normal music. This causes some fun and games!! We still need some more members to fully utilise the two Chromatic Octaves of Hand Bells. Do come and join us! Next Practice – 9th January - 10 Until 11am at Trinity Church Hall.

Ron Castleton

History Group



On 12th December we met at the Windmill Pub for our Christmas Lunch and afterwards we adjourned to our usual venue to be entertained by the U3A Choir with a rousing selection of Christmas Carols and Songs. We joined in at the end and finished off with a mince pie – all very enjoyable.

On 9th January we are going to see the film "Love on the Dole" which depicts a family in Salford living through the depression in the 1920's and 1930's. All are welcome – usual venue at 2pm – Cost £1 which includes tea or coffee and a rather nice biscuit.

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



Our first meeting was so nearly a disaster: only four of us were there and the CD was not compatible with our equipment. Howard came prepared and replaced it with another CD of La Boheme but from Covent Garden with Angela Gheorghiu as Mimi and we relaxed and were swept up in the developing tragedy. An excellent production and wonderful voices.

We will not meet in January but will meet 29 February at Bridge Cottage to watch the Opera programme from Howard Goodall's Big Bangs in Music series.

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



We met at Brian's for our December Play Reading. Only 4 of us could make it, however lots of fun when we read "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Red Hot Cinders" by Richard Tydeman.

Brian and his Shottery Play Reading Group performed both pantos at Shottery U3A Xmas Party.

Please ring Sylvia Crooks on 01789 416965 if you would like to come along in January; change of day to be arranged because of Choir singing every Friday.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry Reading Group



Unfortunately two of our founder members are leaving the group because they are having to take on other responsibilities and will be unable to attend regularly. This means that 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



Our meeting in December was all about Christmas, no surprise there. We had readings from Dicken's A Christmas Carol, and Laurie Lee's Cider with Rosie. The poems were, In the Bleak Midwinter by Christina Rosseti, The Oxen by Thomas Hardy, John Betjeman's Christmas, Christmas Eve 1914 by Mike Harding, The Holly and the Ivy and The Innocents Song by Charles Causley. A very Christmasy afternoon.

Ann Davies

Reading Group – Monday



I think we all enjoyed 'The land as viewed from the sea' by Richard Collins, although his unusual methodology. A love story within another story was at times somewhat confusing. His descriptions of sea views from many standpoints were amazing. As our meeting was our Xmas lunch outing, the author was probably given less of our attention than he deserved.

Phyllis Bailey

Reading Group – Wednesday



We are looking forward to our Christmas lunch at Bistro Pierre on December 21st. At the moment we are reading a novel by Primo Levi who survived Auschwitz. Report later.

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group - Friday



We had the second of the books picked for us by the library is was called, February by Lisa Moore. The story is about a woman whose husband dies on an oil rig twenty years before the actual novel starts. That is the only dramatic event in the whole book. The woman is looking back and trying to link the event to the present so times in the novel are very confusing, it also rather boring.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



We had an interesting and enjoyable programme planned and delivered by Mavis Pickett and Denis Sully. Thank you to both of them. Next month we are meeting as usual – second Thursday – in the Lounge at 2.00. All visitors welcome.

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



We had a really enjoyable Christmas Social in the annexe of the Methodist Hall on Friday 9th. December for over 30 of us, including the newly incorporated Birdwatching sub-group who had the temerity to win the quiz! It was all great fun (nearly a riot!) and great 'bring and share' food, organised by Sandra.

Our next meetings will be on Friday, 13th. Jan at 2.00pm. in the Methodist Hall lounge - a talk and DVD on Sir Joseph Bazalgette 'The Sewer King' and, same time, same place on Friday, 10th. February - a talk and presentation on 'Aviation and the Principles of Flight'. If you have ever wondered just how nearly 400 tons of Jumbo Jet actually manages to fly at all, come along! On 15th. February we are also planning to attend an evening lecture organised by the Warwickshire Geological Conservation Trust on 'Ancient Human Occupation of Britain'. Ask me for more details.

Geoff Bridgewater

Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group



Report on the October 2011 meeting. The first half of the programme gave us tracks dating from 1928 up to 1968. We started the afternoon with Eric Delaney/Louie Bellson playing "Blues March" and moved on to tracks by The Rhythm Aces with Jabbo Smith. A Pine Tops Smith track and "Sitting at the Table" played by Willie The Lion Smith and his Lion Cubs. In all nine tracks were played before we stopped for the tea break and a natter.

The second half of the programme was mainly devoted to Swedish Jazz which was a revelation to some of us. We began with Harry Arnold's Radio Band playing "Quincey's Home Again", which was followed by "Swinging the Blues" with Putte Wickmans Orkester and "I Found a New Baby" played by Sven Sjolholms Orkester. Various other tracks were played and we had a treat of three vocal tracks the first My Funny Valentine by Monica Zetterlund the second Ella Fitzgerald singing "Miss Otis Regrets". The third 'vocal' was an instrumental played by Pee Wee Hunt of "Miss Otis Regrets" which was played in the manner of a vocal. Well worth listening to. The Afternoon finished with "The Late Late Show" by The Linn Tones. Thank you Dennis for another good programme.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 24th November 2011. 2pm to 4pm in The Lounge of the Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon.

Mavis Pickett

New Year Lunch on Saturday 21st January 2012 at Le Bistrot Pierre.

Just to remind you that we are still taking orders for the NEW YEAR LUNCH to be held on Saturday 21st January 2012 at Le Bistro Pierre, Garden Room, Swans Nest Hotel starting at 12 Midday. The Booking Forms and Menu choice will be available at todays meeting and are also online and you can bring money (preferably cheques for £13 each) made out to Heart of England U3A) to todays meeting. Athena will collect them at the door. Or you can send cheques to her, 17 Gifford Walk, SOA CV379LN - 01789 551416.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the celebration for next year.

Athena Roderick

Sunday Lunch Group



There is no Sunday Lunch in January. February will be at the Golden Cross, Temple Grafton on 5.2.12. Names please to Brian Bradley 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

Elgar Imperial March

Wood – London Cameos

Butterworth – Shropshire Lad

Katelbey – In a Monastery Garden

Finzi – Clarinet Concerto

Farnon – Jumping Bean

Coates – London Calling

Coates – Dancing Nights Waltz

Monckton – the Arcadians

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.

Theatre Group



Our next theatre trip is to the Belgrade on 18 February 2012 leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. All tickets for this trip have been sold.

Advance Notice

I have booked tickets for Anne Boleyn on 28 April 2012 and The Lady in the Van on 2 June 2012, both at Malvern. We will start to take names for these in February.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



Dear Walkers – we wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year and will release details of the next walk at the January Meeting.

Valerie Redfern

New Chess Group in Dene Valley U3A

We will be meeting alternate Wednesday afternoons from 2.30 to 4.30 in the Gallery, The Malt House Village Hall in Alveston. The next meeting is on November 16th. The standards will be from beginner through to expert and we will provide tuition and coaching. Group leader (Chess) Dene valley U3A

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

Stratford –25th January. "Kissing it better" - Jill Fraser.

***Shottery – 7th February. "Compton Verney-Past and Present"-Christine Culley DeneValley
– 10 January. "The History of Gibraltar" - Colin Searle.***

Group Leaders Contact List		
Group	Group Leader	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)
Art Appreciation	Phyl Collins Pat Wood	3 rd Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Tony Badham	4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm
Bird Watching Group	John Stagg	See Newsletter for dates
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.30pm
Chinwags Luncheon Group	Aline Cumming	4 th Monday 12 Noon
Choir	Ruth Grahame Dorothy Jones	11.45 for 12 noon, Alternate Fridays
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm
Cooks Club	Chris Heaps	4 th Wednesday
Creative Crafts	Roma Rudd	3 rd Thursday 2 – 4 pm
Computer Group	Robyn Nicoll	2 nd Thursday - 4.15 pm
Dinahs Luncheon Group	Sylvia Crooks	1 st Tuesday for Lunch
Discussion Group	Athena Roderick	2 nd Wednesday
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock	4 th Thursday – 4.00 pm
Grumpy Old Men Group	Graham Mitchell	3 rd Wednesday for Lunch

Hand Bell Ringing Group	Ron Castleton	Alternate Mondays 10am
History Group	Janet Anslow	2 nd 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	Sylvia Crooks	-see Newsletter for dates -
Poetry Reading	Jacqueline Williams	2 nd Weds. 10 – 12 am
Poetry & Prose Appreciation	Anne Davies	As appropriate
Reading Group – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm
Reading Group – Monday	Phyllis Bailey	3 rd Monday–2.30-4.30pm
Reading Group – Friday	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Rock & Roll Music Group	Coral Bradley	2 nd Thursday – 2 – 4pm
Science & Nature Group	Geoff Bridgewater	2 nd Fridays
Stratford Swingers	Dennis Sully	4 th Thursday
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins	As appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	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