

JANUARY TO MARCH 2018 MAGAZINE

Welcome to the January, February, March 2018 edition of our Magazine. This issue runs from 1st January to 31st March and is an archive of some of our activities.

Reports include:

- New Year Lunch
- February Monthly Meeting—John Butterworth
- March meeting of SNATTs—Rob Petherbridge the Molecatcher
- March Walking Group outing around Shipston

Last update: 16th March 2018



Moored boats by Red Lion Pub, Stratford-upon-Avon. Sunnier time of year.

Heart of England U3A New Year Lunch Saturday 20th January 2018 Stratford-upon-Avon Sports Club

On a very wet day in January 2018, 66 members of the Heart of England U3A sat down to a very tasty New Year Lunch. We were using a new venue following the withdrawal of Le Bistrot Pierre from the event market.

After some research by our organiser, Athena Roderick, we sat down in the clubhouse of the Stratford Sports Club in Swans Nest Lane. The clubhouse is a cosy place for a fairly formal lunch event and we were all delighted with the reception from the staff and members.

The chef at the Sports Club, Carl Fox, is also chef at Briar Croft Residential Care Home near the railway station, and quite a

few of our members are familiar with the very good food served there at reasonable cost and which is open to non-residents.

The lunch followed our usual pattern with a welcome from our Chair, Dorothy Jones, a first course and then a general knowledge quiz in during the interval between that and the main course. Most tables managed a good score, with 2 tables managing a full score.

Photographs were taken of each table and can be found with this report in our quarterly magazine; a printed version is available at most monthly meetings and on-line on our website.



New Year Lunch continued



New Year lunch continued



New Year Lunch continued



Monthly Meeting—Thursday 1st February 2018

Talk by John Butterworth

“Hitting The Headline”

Our U3A meeting audience were treated to a very entertaining talk given by John Butterworth of his interesting and varied experience as journalist and editor. When he came to choose a career he was sure what he wanted. He applied for an interview to choose candidates for a job as a reporter with the Daily Mirror. He had not considered journalism but the idea of two nights at a good hotel he thought would be a good outing, and he was surprised to find himself accepted and sent on a training course. So he became a journalist,

Meeting famous people was part of the job, as was the chance to travel to parts of the world unknown to outside. This included Albania and China, both closed at the time to all other countries. He also travelled with seven other people in an old Land Rover for thousands of miles throughout Nepal, on a mission to treat outlying areas for leprosy, before returning to England. During his career John has been involved with several local newspapers as part of the Daily Mirror Group. He has been editor at the Bromsgrove Advertiser, Leek Post and Times, and Shrewsbury Chronicle, a position he held for twelve years until severe cutbacks in 2009. He subsequently returned to journalism in 2013 when he was appointed as Editor of The Black Country Bugle. He held that post until further cutbacks in 2016 when production of the Black Country Bugle was moved away to Tamworth and subsumed into other group titles. John was

awarded the MBE for services to journalism and charity in 2008.

Altogether, John gave a very lively talk about his life and career and was given a very warm round of applause at the end. I am sure that we will be inviting him back for a further talk.



Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group

Friday 9th March 2018

Talk by Rob Petherbridge on The World of the Mole.

Rob Petherbridge has been many things during his lifetime including teacher of various subjects, including science, electronics, design and maths. During the last decade or so he has been a professional mole catcher and is now recognised as a Master Molecatcher by the Guild of British Molecatchers. Rob gave us a talk about the life of the mole and the molecatcher. He provided the photographs in this article and also showed us the sorts of traps that can be used to catch the moles. Some of them were a bit gruesome!



Rob displaying a mole and a mouse (I think)

The next image shows Rob with a handful of moles that he has caught. The final image is a close up of a small mole.

Rob was able to describe how a mole lives, what it eats and how and why it digs tunnels, and where it is likely to be found in the ground.



Moles feed on worms but will also eat other things when necessary. They are territorial and set up a network of tunnel which they patrol to gather food as it drops into the tunnels. Thus, the molecatcher has a chance to trap them as they patrol through their tunnels. Moles are not a gardener's chief pest but they do make a mess when they are in your lawn.

Walking Group—Wednesday 14th March 2018

Walk around Shipston on Stour

On a rare dry day eleven members of the Walking Group had a nice walk circling the outskirts of Shipston on Stour. Starting in the carpark near the river bridge we walked on tarmac roads (at this time of the year we find firm roads preferable to muddy tracks and fields. The itinerary uses quiet country roads around the edge of Shipston, passing through only one village. We have done this walk many times and look forward to a brief stop in the churchyard extension at Burmington where there are some benches for a sit down whilst we have a drink. The benches are in a quiet dell which gave us

some respite from the wind. Whilst dry, the wind was very brisk in exposed places. However, there are lots of trees and hedges providing windbreaks around the circuit.

We did not see too many spring flowers but there were some lambs in a couple of fields.

The photograph below shows the group (minus one who was operating the camera) in Burmington village.

