

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2017 MAGAZINE

Welcome to the January & February 2017 edition of our Magazine. This issue runs from 1st January to 28th February.

Last update: 8th February 2017

Reports include:

January Meeting Report—A Viennese Tragedy

Walking Group—Walton Hall

New Year Lunch

SNATTs January meeting—Paint covers a multitude.

Monthly Meeting—February



Murmuration of Starlings above Bridgetown, Stratford-upon-Avon

January Meeting—A Viennese Tragedy by Geoff Bridgewater

Geoff, our immediate past Chairman, gave a very moving presentation and talk about his Jewish Family History, especially featuring their personal involvement in the Holocaust and the Kindertransport scheme. His story, whilst covering the last century, mainly centred round the lives of his mother, Liselotte, and his grandfather, Edmund Hamber in Vienna, before and during World War 2. Lotte and her two sisters, barely teenagers, escaped with their lives on the Kindertransport, to England whilst Edmund died in Buchenwald Concentration Camp in 1940, in horrific circumstances and his wife, Maria, Geoff's grandmother, in the Mali Tronstents extermination camp in southern Russia. Edmund, with his brother Philipp, was a very well known, rich and successful Austrian film producer and also owned several cinemas and a burlesque theatre. Their luxury lifestyle came to an abrupt end with the Nazi annexation, the

Anschluss, of Austria in late 1938 when Edmund and Philip were arrested, being very well known Jewish agitators for the Social Democrats political party, and deported to Dachau. Maria, after the Kristalnacht (the night of the broken glass), lost all their properties, home, valuable oil paintings and possessions, stolen by the Nazis. She was then sent to the appalling Vienna ghetto before being transported and murdered in 1942. Edmund had foreseen the Anschluss. In fact, he made several anti-Nazi propaganda films, not a good move for a Jew, and was able to move his daughters to a place of safety before their otherwise inevitable fate. It was very frightening to be a Jew at that time. The second half of Geoff's talk featured his mother's life in England and, from speaking very little English, to becoming a college lecturer in English and office routines. She was clearly a clever feisty lady.



Geoff Giving His Illustrated Talk

January Meeting—A Viennese Tragedy by Geoff Bridgewater (continued)



Geoff sitting with his mother and Aunts Trudi and Grettli in 1945

Below left—Edmund Hamber (Geoff's grandfather)

Below right—Geoff's mother, Lotte.



Walking Group—11th January 2017

The Group had a splendid walk from Wellesbourne around Walton Hall Hotel. The weather was dry but rather bright for good photography. The walk is on hard surfaces all the way but mostly away from traffic so we had a pleasant walk.

There is no walk in February and the March walk will be led by Sandy Stewart. More details later.

We do have room for more walkers and the pace is not ener-

getic and the distance a reasonable 5 miles or thereabouts. So do look out for the announcements in the Newsletter and we shall see you at one of our walks. During winter we walk on firm surfaces and during the better weather months we venture onto country walks, over fields where feasible. We do see some interesting sights—flowers and other plants, birds, animals of all sorts. We have a good range of possible walks but are always open to new routes, which we would check over first before taking a group.

Thanks to Val for the photograph.



Group photograph during the walk

New Year Lunch—21st January 2017

About 70 members gathered at Le Bistrot Pierre in Stratford to celebrate the New Year with a convivial lunch. The lunch was good, there was plenty of conversation, a quiz was attempted with varying degrees of success and everyone seemed to be having a good time. There are photographs below where everyone can see who was there.

A name was pulled out of the hat (?) for a prize of a meal for

two in the restaurant; Robyn Nicoll was the lucky winner. There was a prize for the winning table in the quiz.

Thanks are due to Athena who organised the event, Robyn for help with printing the place cards and other decorations, Sue for handling the cash side of affairs, Geoff for arranging the audio equipment, and Andrew from the hotel for organising the dining and menu arrangements.



New Year Lunch—21st January 2017 (continued)



New Year Lunch—21st January 2017 (continued)



New Year Lunch—21st January 2017 (continued)



New Year Lunch—21st January 2017 (continued)



Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group

Friday 13th January 2017

Talk on Paint and how it covers a multitude of sins.

James Maddock (photo below) gave a talk on paint, subtitled How it covers a multitude of sins.

James has worked a lifetime in the paint industry, mostly in a production capacity, including managing large commercial manufacturing facilities. Much of his life was with ICI paints division. He was unable to assist much with the chemistry of paints but was able to point out the differences between paints for commercial use, particularly for cars, and those for home use.



Many developments have happened over the last 50 years in the paints industry. New polymers and base oils, plder heavy metal pigments have been dropped in favour of newer types with less impact on the environment, particularly human health. New methods of application, such as powder coating where no solvents are used and thicker coatings can be achieved. Car parts are now routinely painted in fully automatic, air conditioned booths and then oven baked to ensure a quick and efficient application and cure. Equivalent paints to respray parts of car bodies during repair have to be still ambient dried spray paints and quite unlike those used in manufacture.

Many innovations have been introduced over the years, sometimes to improve the final coating on the substrates, sometimes to make the paint easier for the D-I-Y market to achieve good results with no mess (think about thixotropic paints, One-Coat paints and other marketing ploys), sometimes to enable reduction of heavy metals in paint.

There will be others in the future. Keep looking for them.

Main Meeting—Thursday 2nd February 2017

Illustrated talk by Dogs for Good

Two volunteers from the charity "Dogs for Good" - They were originally called Dogs for the Disabled" gave a talk reinforced by a Powerpoint presentation and Copper, a puppy in training (see picture right). Anna Prosser and Lou Hiorons had brought Copper to illustrate the talk. Anna told us something of the charity, that it did not receive any state funding and had to rely entirely on donations from the public. Dogs are trained for a variety of purposes including blind, dementia, mobility assistance, community and other needs. Dogs are carefully selected from known breeders and dog breeds. The puppies come to the charity at about 8 weeks. They are then placed with carefully selected trainers for them to rear them in a secure environment for about 2 years during which they will be trained to be sociable, good with people and children, to obey a standardised set of commands. They can then pass onto another trainer to be trained for a specific purpose. We were impressed to hear how much help



these dogs could give to families who have autistic members.

More information about the charity's activities and aims can be seen on the website:

www.dogsforgood.org

Donations and legacy gifts are always welcome. We raised £237.68 at the meeting for the group.

Copper with Anna Prosser during talk above.

Promotion materials left.



Science, Nature and all Things Technical Group

Friday 10th February 2017

The Unbelievable Mysteries of the Universe

Geoff Bridgewater

Geoff gave a presentation about his take on the mysteries of the universe, illustrating it with many facts and figures and quite a few diagrams and images. We live on the third planet of an insignificant solar system comprising a single sun (unusual, apparently) and eight planets and many other odd bits of rock. Our sun is pretty small compared to a lot in the universe. We are on the edge of an elliptical galaxy, which we see as the Milky Way on good clear black nights, and there are many other galaxies that we can see, some with our naked eyes, many through a telescope.



Geoff setting up equipment for talk.

The earth is moving in several ways and Geoff described two motions. The earth revolves once per day on its axis and so the

speed of rotation at the equator is about 1040 mph (1674kph). Also the earth moves around the sun in an elliptical orbit at about 67,000 mph (110,000 kph). Geoff also touched on the fact that the universe is also expanding without going into details of speeds. He explained that the current theory is that the universe began about 13.7 billion years ago with an almighty explosion from nothing to creating billions of tonnes of elements expanding outwards.

What is the Universe to us. Most of us think only of the place where we live and perhaps those exciting places we visit on holiday. The Earth is probably as much outside that vision that we think of:

The picture is the Earth from space.



Yet there are millions of planets around the galaxy and even more across the universe, many of which can support life.

So we need to view life in a much wider context and enjoy the wonders of the Universe.