

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2017 MAGAZINE

Welcome to the October, November and December 2017 edition of our Magazine. This issue runs from 1st October to 31st December.

Reports include:

- Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group Visit to The Acme Whistle Factory in Birmingham, October.
- October Main Meeting—Royal Navy Presentation
- Garden Appreciation Group—Visit to Compton Verney
- Science, Nature and All Things Technical

Group. Talk by Ian Roberts on “The Science of Michelangelo”. November 2017.

- Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group, Christmas Social and Quiz. Friday 8th December 2017.
- Choir Concert—December 2017

Last update: 27th December 2017



Canal Basin, Stratford-upon-Avon, August 2017

October 2017 Meeting

Presentation by Royal Navy Media Team

“What the Navy are doing on your behalf and why it matters”

Three personnel from the Royal Navy Media Team came to give a very entertaining and interesting account of their own roles. The team included a Commander, a Rating and a Royal Marine and each gave an interpretation about life in the Royal Navy, what they do and why it is important to all of us. Also included was an account of why the Royal Navy matters to the nation.



Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group

Visit to Acme Whistle Factory, Birmingham

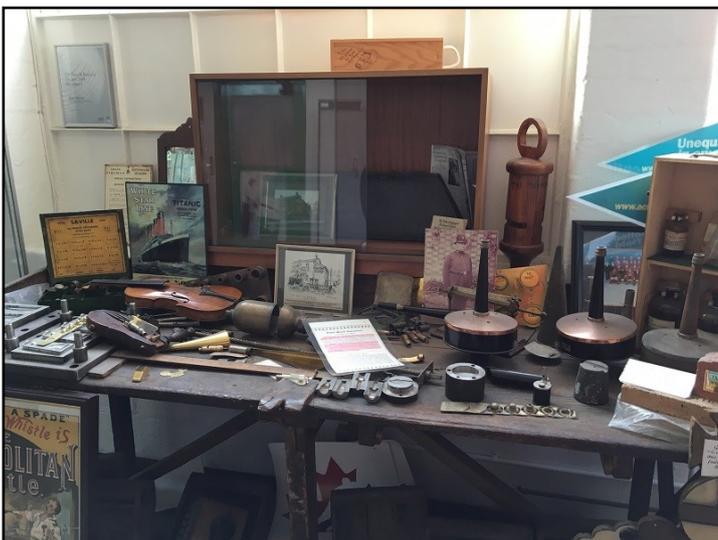
Thursday 12th October 2017

On Thursday 12th of October, 20 SNATTs members, full of enthusiasm despite the early start, met at Stratford station to travel en-masse to the Jewellery Quarter, for a great day out. Arriving at the Jewellery Quarter station, and after a short walk, we arrived at an unprepossessing old, Victorian factory and we little knew what a fascinating couple of hours or so were in prospect. After a reviving coffee and bickie, Simon Topman, Acme Whistle MD, entertainingly told us the history of the Company, prior to a full tour of the works with the jocular advice, "Please don't put your hand in the sulphuric acid vat!". We were so close to all the production processes and the workforce, we could have done just that! We may be old but we're not that stupid!

Founded towards the end of the 19th Century in the washroom of a tiny a back-to-back house by James Hudson, and subsequently run by successive members of his family, sons and grandsons, Acme Whistles have supplied millions of whistles and complimentary products throughout the World. His first order, the Metropolitan Police whistle replaced their outmoded 'rattle' and generated an order for James Hudson for 21,000 whistles, to be made in his washhouse! In fact, the police loaned him £20 to get started. The Acme 'Thunderer' referees whistle reigns supreme, has been made in millions, and is still used around the World today. They still make nearly 50 different products, all from their interesting old factory, still with evidence of war damage, in the 'city of 5,000 Trades. 'Brum'!

After the tour, we all had a lovely lunch in the Hylton Cafe' and then back on the train.

A truly memorable and fun day out.



Workbench with display of products

SNATTs Visit to Acme Whistle Factory (continued)



Group watching somebody at work—always a pleasant experience.

Group photograph



Garden Appreciation Group

Visit to Compton Verney 10th October 2017

This group visited Compton Verney in October, to see the lovely grounds designed by Capability Brown. We also discovered an installation called *The Clearing* about the end of the world! The members were lucky to have a talk about the Chinese Brass collection in the permanent exhibition centre.



Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group

Friday 10th November 2017

The Science of Michelangelo by Ian Roberts

There was a good turnout for this illustrated talk. Geoff reminded members of the audience about the December meeting with the interesting quiz to be put on by Bob and Chris Heaps. Heather was taking nominations for items for the shared tea.



Ian the talk began by saying that he has been fascinated by Michelangelo and also Leonardo da Vinci for many years and he was asked to give a talk about him to the Art Appreciation Group about 12 months ago. This afternoon's talk is based on the earlier one but with extra research and information. Unfortunately, expenses were not sufficient to fund a further fact finding visit to Florence or Rome to further enhance the experience. But if anyone wants to organise a group visit next year perhaps?

Both artists were born near Florence and both were polymaths—working in sculpture, painting, architecture, military architecture and other

disciplines. Marble was the preferred material for sculpture. It was relatively easy to obtain as almost the whole of the Apennines were of limestones or marble. Marble from Carrara was available near the coast above Pisa and it was a particularly white and fine grained stone, ideal for sculpture. It was also, being a metamorphic stone, able to withstand weathering quite well.



Ian talked about balance in a sculpture. The piece needs to be able to stand without falling over so thought has to be given to a piece's balance, no heavy overhangs, and sufficient stone left in the right place to sustain the sculpture in an upright stance.

Science, Nature and All Things Technical, continued



The David statue is well balanced and the right leg is also braced by some extra support behind the foot and lower leg. The original statue is now indoors in a nearby museum and there is a replica situated in the piazza by the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence where the original stood for 300 years or more.

There were plenty of questions and comments.

Science, Nature and All Things Technical Group

Friday 8th December 2017

Christmas Social and Quiz.

For the last meeting of the year we held the traditional (at least 5 years in the making!!) Christmas Social and Quiz. Heather organised everyone to bring some food for the Share Tea so that we did not end up with a mountain of mince pies and no sausage rolls! It all went well and there was a varied supply in adequate quantities.

Chris and Bob Heaps put on a quiz with a range of questions, both general and vaguely scientific. Do you know which member of the animal kingdom goes through several thousand teeth during its life? Or do you know how many miles of blood vessels there are in the adult human body?

We were organised into teams of 3 and 4 for the quiz. The winners by some margin were the team comprising the outgoing Group Leader, Geoff Bridgewater and Heather plus the new Group Leader, Mike Genge and Suzy. Mike takes over from January 1st.

Above is a photograph of Chris and Bob Heaps. Below are photographs of the teams.



Science, Nature and All Things Technical, continued

More team photographs:



The winning team (self called "The Leader Board"):



The prize was a box of Roses chocolates which, by tradition, was offered around the tables to the other teams as well.

We all had a pleasant time and now look forward to a new programme of meetings under our new Group Leader. It is unlikely that we will have a meeting during January but look forward to the February meeting.

Choir Concert—Tuesday 19th December 2017

Stratford Methodist Church Hall

The U3A Choir is open to all members of the local network of five U3A Groups in and near Stratford-upon-Avon and, since being founded by in 2010 with a few members from Heart of England U3A, the membership has risen to nearly 80 members from 5 U3A groups.

There were 9 items on the programme but, in fact, there several other items performed as well. It was all entertaining, with some very Christmassy pieces and some quite funny pieces. There were old favourites as well so those who wanted to could sing along with the

choir sometimes.

The choir is pictured at the foot of the page. Cyril, Norman and Robin went off programme



Choir Concert continued.

The next solo was also off programme when Val sang.



The next piece was a medley of three well known Christmas songs. and was followed by 'Behold That Star', sung by John Humphreys.

Later, John Humphreys sang a humorous song based on 'Good King Wenceslas', where a bit of dressing up was required



Next up was a Christmas story (almost of the "shaggy dog" type) given by Mary Taylor. Picture in next column

Later in the programme Cyril, aided by several ladies of the choir, performed a '12 days of Christmas song with unusual items supposedly given on the days of Christmas. Pictures on the next page.

Choir Concert continued



Sylvia and Graham sang a very nice duet towards the end of the programme.

The programme was finished with another medley of favourite carols where everyone could join in if they wished.

Well done and thanks to the choir and Stewart Wallace, the musical director.

