

AUTUMN 2014 MAGAZINE

Welcome to the autumn 2014 edition of our Magazine. This issue runs from 1st October to 31st December 2014.

It includes reports from the following groups:

Games Group - October

Walking Group - October & December

U3A Study Day

Skittles Evening

China Group

December Main Meeting - Christmas Entertainment

Science & Nature Group - Christmas Quiz.

The Choir concert at Briarcroft.

There are many other activities and groups within HoE U3A which go unreported. If any Group Leaders wish to see their group featured please contact the editor or provide photographs and a brief report.



Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon - Shakespeare's Church

Games Group

The Games Group meet on two Mondays per month - 1st and 3rd. The NEW meeting place is Side Room 1 at The Methodist Church Hall in Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon. We are now settled there and find the room very comfortable with excellent facilities. Sue, our leader, has now obtained some

table cloths - the dominoes were making a terrible noise on the Formica table tops as they were shuffled!!

Three games are currently played - Scrabble, Dominoes (5's and 3's) and Whist. There is room for other games and Canasta has been considered but not yet actioned.

At our first meeting in October (Monday 6th) there were 12 members present, including 2 new members. There were also a few regular members not present for various reasons.



The Scrabble table.



Tea break.

At our second meeting on Monday 20th October there were a similar number playing on three tables, including one of Scrabble.

Our meeting on 3rd November saw our largest



attendance so far - 17 members attending. There were two Scrabble tables.

Walking Group - Wednesday 8th October 2014

Thirteen members gathered in Little Compton for the October walk. This is supposed to be unlucky and we were, for once, unlucky with the weather. Whilst it was dry when we set off, it was not long before the rain started and continued for much of the walk. We sheltered under some trees in a wooded part of the walk when we had a break for refreshments, those who had brought them. It did cease raining during the latter half of the walk, but was never far away and we did receive a few drops all the way.

Little Compton church, below left, has an unusual tower. We parked next to the church.



Above, it is still raining when we turn right to follow a field edge on our way back to Little Compton.

Below, the large image shows a wet party trying to find some shelter under the trees when we stop for a refreshment break.



U3A Study Day - Services & Providers for older people Wednesday 22nd October 2014

Heart of England U3A hosted an afternoon meeting at the Methodist Church Hall, Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon., devoted to services and providers for older people. Presentations were made by 17 service providers who also each had a small display stand or table where information leaflets and further questions could be asked following the presentations.

These included:

HoE U3A Card Making Group (image below).

They make many types of greetings cards which they sell at U3A meetings. Proceeds are given to a different charity each month.



NRB Grounds

Emma Restall Orr said a few words about Sun Rising Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve. Opened in 2006, Sun Rising is located near Lower Tysoe, off the Banbury to Stratford road (A422), in beautiful rural countryside. It is 16 acres that is gently developing into a valuable nature reserve in which you can be buried, or have ashes interred, either in growing woodland where trees can be planted on graves, or in wild-flower meadow or grassland. It's a wonderfully peaceful site, for people of all religious and non-religious beliefs, for traditional funerals, or very personal funerals - which can be colourful and celebratory, or totally graceful in simplicity.



Whatever the case, whatever your situation, Emma can lead you step by step with real care, through the process, allowing you to stay in control at what can be the hardest times of life. It's all about choice, freedom, and being able to be yourself, just like the U3A! Call Emma (01295 688488) or check the website (sunrisingburialground.co.uk) for more information. (See image top right)

Image below shows several displays in the main hall.



Citizens' Advice Bureau

Marilyn Price gave us information. Address of SoA CAB is 25 Meer Street, Tel 01789 200156.

Advice is given about Welfare Benefits; money, including banking; utilities & credit problems; consumer rights and many other concerns. Reach Out and Help is a new service which will be running drop-in sessions. Telephone 01789 200131 or email roah@stratforduponavoncab.org.uk. 200131 is also the number to check on Warm Homes Discount. There is an awful lot of help available from CAB.

BUPA Alveston Leys Nursing & Residential Home

Emma Miles brought information about the excellent facilities at the home for long stay & also short stay care, for instance, after an operation, or may be to give a carer a break. There is also a Day Care 'Pop in' Service.

Lifeways

James Pavitt spoke about the wide range of therapies on offer at 30 Albany Road. He also talked about the beautiful gardens which are constantly developing for the benefit of the community. One of our members is arranging a group visit in the spring, when James will describe the activities & forthcoming events.

Dorn Haus

Birgitte talked of the Dorn Method as being a gentle therapy for back & joint pain & re-alignment of imbalances throughout the body. It also teaches a set of simple exercises to be continued at home, to maintain balance longer term. Tel: 0845 5192744; www.domhaus.org; see display at Stratford Garden Centre.

Samaritans Stratford-upon-Avon

Noreen Dean & Ros Hill told us about their extensive 24 hour services. They offer personal help with emotional problems, self-harm & give encouragement for people to help friends and family. They offer understanding to people who are suicidal. They are not funded by government. Tel: 08457 909090; jo@samaritans.org
AGE-UK (formerly known as Age Concern)

Barry Collier brought information & advice on a number of important issues for older people, including health & well being, home support, money matters. It offers a befriending service for



people over 70 living on their own or with a dependent relative. It also provides home safety checks, adaptations & small household repairs, where suitable. They facilitate 20 minute Advice Clinics provided by Moore & Tibbits. Warwick HQ 01926 458100 Stratford 01789 205059

ShoeMed

Lisa Preston brought a varied selection of shoes for people to look at and try on. They look stylish but are designed to be kind to our feet and may even redress some of the damage we cause our feet by our constant walking on them. Shop in Minorities in Stratford.

Harmony Skin Care Specialist.

Rachel Dixon told us about the range of treatments available for the older skin, plus beautiful

cosmetics to keep the skin in top class condition. If a little pampering is required, then here it is.
6 Union Street, Stratford

Johnsons Coaches

Wendy Moore brought plenty of brochures about holidays of all kinds, including visits in Britain and in Europe to Christmas Festivals, summer holidays all over the Continent and as far afield as Australia and New Zealand. They also do day trips all over Britain to places of interest.

Shakespeare Hospice.

Katy Connor told us that in addition to the well known day service there is a new service "Children & Family Support Service" which gives support to children between 4 and 18 years old facing loss or who have a parent suffering a severe illness. The support will also be there for other family members.

VASA. (Lately CVS)

Charles Barlow brought information about the Volunteer Drivers Scheme, which takes people to hospital & essential medical engagements. As always, more drivers are required to keep a good service going. Tel: 01789 262886

Men In Sheds

Richard Ware told us something of this, as yet small enterprise. Needing more space to house it's DIY equipment & space to work, it offers a useful activity and friendship. More convivial than a shed in your own garden!
Chairman Richard Ware 01789 268294.

Transition Stratford/TimeBank

Roger Cooper brought some information about both projects. **Transition Stratford** organise 3 services which may be of interest to our readers.

Harvest Share - is about picking & distributing fruit from trees in people's gardens, fields and even community orchards which otherwise would

be wasted. It needs many willing hands to do this. Even in poor years, plenty of fruit can still be saved.

Garden Share is about garden sharing when somebody who has more garden than they can manage invites somebody who would like to grow plants in to share their garden.

TimeBank is a similar idea where one person earns credits for doing something for somebody else & then they use the credits to get something that they need done.

Tel: 07419 373680;
timebank@transitionstratford.com

Back & 4th Transport

Kate Skinner explained about the community scheme offering affordable transport in South Warwickshire. The minibuses seat 15 to 16 passengers & are wheel chair accessible & are used for shopping trips, lunch outings, educational trips etc. In Warwick District it provides transport to medical appointments. Tel: 01789 471595.

(See image on page 5 - right column)

Stratford Leisure Centre.

Nick Richards was not able to attend, but a DVD of Walking Basket Ball was shown, which was an example of facilities available for people of our age group. Also available is Aquafit in the pool, Badminton, Short Mat Bowls, Exercise To Music, Table Tennis & now, Walking Football. All geared for our age group & very reasonably priced.

Family Solicitor Ladders.

Emma Vaqueiro highlighted the urgent need for everyone to put in place a Lasting Power of Attorney, which eases and speeds up the task for anyone who has to take control of your affairs when tragedy strikes - accident, dementia, etc.

Skittles Evening Friday 14th November 2014

Brian and Coral Bradley organised a skittles evening at Welford Bowling Club. This was the third time we have been there for such an evening - the venue is wonderful with very good catering for the supper. We are made to feel very comfortable. In fact, it was left to our Chairman, Geoff Bridgewater and his other half, Heather, to get the ball rolling, so to speak, as Coral was in hospital for an operation. Brian appeared about halfway through the evening, having brought Coral home. We all hope you are feeling better Coral.

All 30 U3A members had managed to get to the bowling club and we had an enjoyable evening with two rounds each. As usual, there were several people who managed to miss all the skittles on one or other of the rounds, your writer included.

The ladies ruled the evening for a change . Highest score in the first round was by a lady and ladies won all the prizes. See the photos. Two of Geoff's granddaughters managed the skittles for us and did a good job. The supper was, as usual, very tasty and enjoyable.

Pictured below the business end of the skittle alley.

Pictured below an action shot.



Another action shot! Good one Cyril!



There were four contenders for the runner up prize:-



The three pictures opposite are Chairman Geoff Bridgewater presenting first, Runner up and Boo-by prizes to

- Lorely Edwards
- Ivy Stevenson
- Janet Anslow

China Group - Illustrated talk by Sandy Stewart



At the meeting of the China discussion group on 7th November I gave a snapshot of the highlights of my recent trip to China with my husband.

We began in Beijing where we visited historic sights such as Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven & Summer Palace. We were also driven from there to Jinshanling where we walked up to the Great Wall & then along it for a few hours- an impressive experience & quite awe inspiring to think that over 6000 km of wall began construction over 2000 years ago.

From there we went by high speed train to the old capital of China- the walled city of Xian- now made famous since the discovery of the Terra-cotta Warriors in 1974. These life size warriors are all unique and entry into Pit 1 produces an almost magical feeling - as if they are about to start marching!

Following this was our 4 day cruise along the Yangtze River seeing some spectacular scenery, new towns growing up quickly along the now flooded banks replacing old villages and culminating in passage through the Three Gorges Dam. The Dam has 5 ship locks, each changing the water level by 20 metres, it is the world's biggest hydro electric plant and the world's largest construction project to date.

In Shanghai we saw the modern skyline of the Pudong district across the river from almost colonial architecture on the Bund. We did tea tasting then visited a silk factory seeing the whole process from silk worm to finished products & spent a lot in the shop!

We boarded a boat in Guilin to spend a morning sailing downstream on the scenic Li River disembarking in Yangshuo which is apparently described by the Chinese as 'the most beautiful place in China'. There we joined a local fisherman with his

trained cormorants who returned their catch to him. We saw a captivating performance of the local folk story- all of which takes place on a side stream of the Li. The Liu Sanjie performance was first opened in 2003 and was directed by the man who later went on to choreograph the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics.

Our final destination was Longji, the Dragon's Backbone, which is a region set amongst steep rice terraces in the mountains in the north of the Guangxi province. It took the local farmers over 400 years to terrace the land by hand & the area is accessible only by foot. However, the stunning panorama of rice terraces made the climb more than worthwhile.



Above - Pit 1 of the "Terracotta Army".

Opposite:
 River Li

Below:
 Terraced hillsides where rice is grown.



December Meeting - Christmas Entertainment

The December meeting on Thursday 4th December took the form of a Christmas Entertainment. U3A members led to the entertainment and mince pies were on offer in the welcome and refreshment area after the meeting.

Dorothy was MC for the afternoon and introduced each item. The first item was a showing of the DVD of the presentation of an MBE at Buckingham Palace by HM The Queen to Clarissa Roberts. Clarissa has worked in Stratford for many years in the voluntary sector in high profile positions.

Geoff Bridgewater was on next to demonstrate the "coat of many colours" made by members of the Creative Crafts Group from many knitted squares. The sponsorship and sale of squares raised £100 for The Stroke Association.

Norman Heads lead us in a series of seasonal songs and carols, accompanying with his ukelele.

The Play Reading Group entertained with a short playlet "A Victorian Melodrama". It was also very amusing.



Janet Anslow read a poem

Geoff in his Coat of Many Colours:



Walking Group - December 2014

Val and Fred chose a route that we have used before - start point in Loxley Close near the Co-operative supermarket in Wellesbourne out into the country towards Walton Hall, through their grounds on a bridle way, and then back to the middle of Wellesbourne via the Kineton Road, and then through the village to the start point.

We stopped for a refreshment break by the lake in the grounds of Walton Hall. There are two very

convenient wooden benches there and a very nice view. The ducks on the lake were quite noisy and the sunshine was very welcome. Mince pies were on offer from Fred and were most welcome.

Thanks to Val and Fred for organising the walk and for hard footpaths and roads all the way.



Pictures - deep ford; group walking



Science & Nature Group - December Quiz

The meeting on Friday 12th December was billed as a "fiendishly easy quiz". Quizmaster was the inimitable Geoff Bridgewater. Heather, his other half, organised the rest of us to provide a bring and share buffet after the quiz was finished and all felt in dire need of a drink and bite.

There was a good turn out of members with 8 teams of 4 players to confide to produce the answers. The winning team managed 32 correct from a total of 35 questions. Everyone had a good time - the questions were on a variety of subjects, loosely associated with things scientific - mathematics, geology, geography, cosmology, chemistry, physics.

Winning team were the "elf team", comprising Ian, Dave, Edwin and Brenda, who achieved a collective score of 32. Close second were a team comprising Sarah, Heather and Athena, who achieved a score of 29.

A few photographs are included - done with an Ipad as the normal camera was forgotten. So please forgive the paucity of images and their relatively poor content, etc.

The buffet was superb and most members managed to stay awhile and chat over a drink and bite. Thanks to both Geoff and Heather for putting on the event.



The Choir - Concert at Briarcroft

Thursday 18th December 2014

A large contingent from the choir performed a concert of Christmas carols, songs and poems for the residents of Briarcroft, under the very able leadership of Musical Director, Stewart Wallace.

There were some popular songs with a Christmas theme, a good selection of popular Christmas carols and some thought provoking and some witty readings and poems.



***MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
 TO ALL OUR READERS***

***LET US HOPE FOR A VERY ENJOYABLE TIME OVER THE FESTIVE
 SEASON AND A HEALTHY START TO THE NEW YEAR
 THE WINTER 2015 EDITION WILL COMMENCE IN JANUARY***