



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England U3A

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MARCH 2012 NEWSLETTER

TODAYS SPEAKER

The speaker this month is Mr J Butler whose talk will be on the most interesting topic of 'The Art of Sculpture'.

NEXT MONTHS SPEAKER

The speaker on 5th April will be Mrs. Pam Sutton who is going to talk to us about the most important work of the charity, Troop Aid, supporting injured troops on their return to the U.K.

The U3A's in the Stratford area have been contacted by Mrs Barbara Hedley who is an Assistant Ombudsman and who wants to set up a group to discuss participants experience in using adult social care. If you have any experience of this and would be prepared to join such a group please let me know and I will liaise with the other U3A's to find out what meetings are being arranged.

David Sladden

New Groups

Without doubt we, in the Heart of England U3A, have a thriving choice of interest groups from Art Appreciation to Walking. Perhaps you have an interest or expertise in a subject that may also interest other members of our U3A. So why not form a group? We'll give you lots of information and help in setting up a new group. A few suggestions could include archaeology, film, gardening, political history, practical art or painting, languages, classics, history, art, literature, chess, ballroom dancing, short story writing. If have any ideas 'buttonhole' me at the monthly meeting, email me (geofbridge@yahoo.co.uk) or telephone.

Geoff Bridgewater

We have arranged an annual meeting for new members in June for several years. I want this to continue but would also like to add to this by having a number of smaller, informal meetings after the normal monthly meetings. The first of these will be in March, after today's meeting and will be held in the lounge. If you would like any information about Heart of England U3A or the interest groups please bring your tea and join me and some of the Committee Members and Group Leaders at the end of today's meeting. David Sladden".

The lounge has been booked from 3.30 pm for an hour and I hope some of you will be able to join me so that we can try to make H of E U3A even more welcoming for our new members.

David Sladden

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

The China On-liners will be meeting next Wednesday, 7th March, in the Side Room, from 2.30 to 4.30. We will be welcoming Dick Pryor, a keen photographer and newly elected Chairman of Dene Valley U3A, who will be presenting a show of his photographs taken on a recent visit to China. Interested members are invited to join us for this afternoon.

Also, it would be a suitable time to slot into this course as units covering the Early Empire have been completed and we now enter the second phase beginning 589 AD which will lead on to the present time. Do contact Robyn for more details.

Robyn Nicoll

Art and Artists Group On-liners

February 2012 was the final meeting of our study of the U3A Download Art Course "Great Northern European Artists". We have studied the art and artists Hieronymus Bosch; Van Dyck; Franz Hals; Rembrandt and many others. This course ended with the study of the art and artist Vermeer. As a group we have enjoyed our study of this course, and we are now embarking on a more challenging U3A Download Art Course, "Artists of Spain-Level-2". Our group would like to express our appreciation and thanks to Robyn, for her kind help downloading the U3A Courses for us, and for the assistance she has so willingly given to us.

Mavis Pickett; on behalf of our Group.

Archive Document Pages (Photographs) on Website.

We are changing the way that the pages are presented over the next few weeks. Members need take no action to be able to see the new page format. The changes involve collecting individual pages that you currently see and making them into multiple page documents. These will be easier to manage for the viewer as you can flick from one page to the next by clicking on an arrow in Acrobat Reader. This is instead of using the browser back arrow button to exit the one page and move onto the next page. The pages will generally be arranged by subject and year. Check the website and see. The first pages changed are the Walking Group and the others will follow as soon as I can manage it. I will be pleased to accept feedback.

Edwin Lilly

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Anna Barton

We have sadly to inform you that Anna Barton has died. She was an active member of a number of Interest Groups, including Chinwags, Friday Reading Group and Classical Music, where her choice of programme was always an enjoyable mix of the familiar and the less well known. She supported trips to Symphony Hall concerts and Theatre visits. She valiantly came in her mobility scooter to the Tenth Birthday party. We shall miss her wit and apposite comments.

Aline Cumming

Art Appreciation Group



We unfortunately had to cancel the February meeting which was to Leamington Art Gallery because of the weather. In March we will be at Pat's house, showing and talking about our favourite *objets d'art*.

On May 18th we have booked a guided tour of Beckford Silk Mill (on A46 about 3 miles beyond Evesham). After a talk they take us up to the rooms where they do all the fabric printing. There is also a "seconds" shop there and a cafe. If anyone would be interested in joining us (cost £4 each) please get in touch with me or Pat Wood.

Phyl Collins

Big Band Swing Jazz Group



This month's playlist (January) was put together and presented by Sue Tringham who focused on mainly UK jazz performers who are still alive!!!

The program was very successful and included many familiar bands led by the three 'B's'- Baker, Barber & Bilk! Sue also introduced a band most of us had never heard of, namely the

'Just The Job Jazz Band' which treated us to some great Trad standards. Thanks Sue.
Next meeting 28th. February. Come and try us out!

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



We met in January gratefully at Grants, the restaurant having opened especially for us and fourteen of our group turned out in response. The topic was the Olympics and one of us had visited the site and commented on the way it was improving the run-down area. None of us intends to go but while family members had been successful in obtaining tickets we mostly intend to be glued to the TV for the duration. The Jubilee celebrations also came in for a mention. We meet again at Grants on 27 February.

Aline Cumming

The Choir



We swing along happily with all types of new music – this time with named travel destinations – rather like our own musical journey!

From 3rd March we will rehearse weekly – due to popular demand, as they say. So the tempo increases, we are working on ten songs now in various stages of development.

A Date for your Diary – THE U3A CHOIR CONCERT
Friday, 15th June. 2.30 – 3.30pm Methodist Hall
More Details! Later.

Tony Griffiths

Classical Music Group



We met in February and four of us listened to George's favourite pieces and performers. However, the meetings have not been well supported and the Lounge has to be paid for so we have decided to revert to meeting in each other's homes as a trial. So come to Bridge Cottage on 12 March at 2.30.

Aline Cumming

Computer Group at Stratford School.



The Basic Brush-up Course, including e-mailing, is underway. Dates booked in March – 8th and 22nd

Requests have been received for a **Digital Camera and Computer Course** to begin after Easter.

The proposed starting date will be on **Thursday, April 26th, from 4pm to 6pm.** There will be 6 sessions (2nd and 4th Thursdays) taking us to July 12th. The cost of this course will depend on numbers attending and is anticipated to be approx. £16. Members will need to have photos on their digital camera and a connecting lead with USB plug.

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

Robyn Nicoll

Creative Craft Group



Our February meeting got off to a good start with a good attendance and our knitting project for the children's school scarves for the Amasango School in South Africa.

Our project next month will be Tunisian Crochet which sounds very interesting. Everyone is eager to learn how to do this. If this is something you would like to try please come along. Everyone will be made very welcome. We plan on following this up in our April meeting.

Our next meeting is on 15th March in the Annex 2-4pm.

Roma Rudd

Dinahs



We could not eat at Grants in February, they were closed Monday and Tuesday in January February and March; we enjoyed lunch at The Church Street, Town House instead.

It was a cold day outside however the welcome inside soon warmed us up. It was lovely to see Deirdre back from her family Christmas in Australia, feeling the cold after the warmer climes down under.

We talked about Retirement Homes, or moving to something smaller, so one can keep their independence without too much hard work, also climbing buildings!! as seen on television, family resemblances; and 'Dads Army', performed by a new amateur group in Stratford; well worth seeing.

We next meet at Bella Italia on Wood Street, 6th March. 12.30.

Sylvia Crooks

Discussion Group



Discussion Group Meeting on Wednesday 8 February.

I had borrowed the Archive from Edwin and we passed it around. It is a lovely record and I do recommend that Group Leaders borrow it, where it is convenient to share it. More photos would also be nice.

We talked about past holidays. Places like Jerusalem, Croatia, Majorca, Africa, Italy, China & USA were lovingly recalled & memories shared. It all brought warmth to a rather cold day. It was all very interesting.

The next Discussion Group is Wednesday March 14th at West End at 1pm as usual. "

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



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.

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



Although 2026, the theoretical completion date of HS2, the high speed rail line from Birmingham to London, may indeed be a "bridge too far" for the current crop of Grumps, they demonstrated a very lively interest in the subject. The intriguing and often contradictory facts and figures, depending whether provided by supporters or opposition to the project, relative to speed, reduced journey times, costs, job creation, environmental effects etc., revealed by Keith Riste's excellent introduction produced an interesting debate. The claims and counter claims put forward by various interested parties were "taken with a pinch of salt" as the information provided did not seem to be able to be verified through a truly independent source. Regardless of strong opposition it will undoubtedly go ahead as it is a "political decision" and probably it should be supported with a healthy dose of scepticism particularly with regard to the cost.

Grump of the Month Award went to John Shelley for his fascinating and captivating account of the development of increased speed on the railways with the aid of engines and rolling stock from his extensive model railway collection.

Next Meeting - Wed. 21st March. **Venue** - Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - ROOM 101. **Introduced by** - Robert Chorley.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



We are continuing to play from normal music and we think we are making some progress? We are still working our way through the course in the Handbell Ringers Handbook, so no experience is necessary at this stage if you would like to join us. *We still need some more members to fully utilise the two Chromatic Octaves of Hand Bells.* Do come and join us.

Ron Castleton

History Group



At our January Meeting Robyn Nicoll told us about the U3A on-line course on the History of China, which several members have been following. China has the longest history of any country in the world, dating from 2,200BC, and Robyn gave us an information sheet on the various dynasties from then to the present time (the course members are up to 500AD!!).

We learned about the bronzes dating from 2,000 years, the 6,000 terracotta figures buried with the Emperor Shi Huangdi in his tomb, the rapid spread of Buddhism from India in the first century and the philosopher Confucius who lived from 552 to 479BC. Although his "sayings" are often quoted, none of his written texts survive. A fascinating civilisation, well worth studying.

At our meeting on Monday 12th March, Harold Pleasance, who told us recently about his experiences as a Japanese prison-of-war, is going to show us a BBC DVD on what happened after the prisoners were released. It will complete his story. All are welcome – 2pm in the Side Room of the Methodist Hall.

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



We will meet on Wed 29 February at Bridge Cottage to see the Opera programme from Howard Goodall's Music Big Bangs 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



Play Reading was at Gwyneths, on 17th February. There were 8 of us, we read Act 1 of "Letters to a General" by Maurice McLoughlin.

The Period is 1950 - Irish Nuns working in China. We will have to wait for Act II until Thursday March 29th.

Please ring Sylvia if you are interested in coming along.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry Reading Group



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.

Poetry and Prose Reading Group



March.

With just a very few members present, we explored some of the poems by E E Cummins, Ian Fletcher, Robert Louis Stevenson, Allen Ahlberg, Gerald Bullett, Gervais Finn, and Judith Viorst amongst others. A very entertaining afternoon. The next meeting will be on 7th

Ann Davies

Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we are reading "The Future Homemakers of America" by Laurie R. King. The Daily Telegraph review says "superlative, the writing sparkles from first to last". We'll find out if our group agrees when we meet on Wednesday?

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group - Friday



This month we read *Empress Orchid* by Anchee Min. It is novel based on the life of the last empress of China. We all found it very interesting and it raised many questions notably about the relationship between China and the West during the nineteenth century. Our only criticism about the book was that there was too much description we had all had enough satin and jade by the end of the book.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



Another successful meeting where we listened to rock music mainly from the fifties and early sixties with some interesting discussion taking place. The next meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month and new members are always welcome.

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



On February 10th Geoff gave the group a talk "Aviation & the principles of Flight" This included Newton's Law of Motion and Force and the structure of Airfoils, which are designed to create a reaction upon its surface from the air through which it moves. He interspersed the heavier topics with reminiscences of his flying career.

March 9th Sarehole Mill Tour-- near Hall Green (11 am). Followed by Pub Lunch

April 13th Blaenavon World Heritage Centre (all day)

Sandra Sladden

All Swing and Jazz Group – changed from Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group



Report by Mavis Pickett of the January Meeting

As you can see, the January Meeting brought with it not only a new programme but a new name for our group.

The meeting got off to a good start with Ted Heath and his Music playing "Cotton Fields" followed by a Mundell Lowe track and then Chris Barber playing "I Can't Give You Anything but Love" which was sung by Othillie Patterson. We had a superb Vibraphone solo from The Red Norvo Septet playing "Roses of Picardy" and then tracks from the Tony Scott Quartet, Jack Webb-Pete Kelly's Big 7 and Pee Wee Hunt. After a *very* 'chatty' interval we started the second half with The Kai Winding Septet playing and telling the story of "Frankie and Johnny" (If you haven't heard it do try to, it gives a lovely lesson in "hip" talk). We then went on to tracks by Oscar Peterson Trio, Roseatta Crawford and Her Hep Caps and the Benny Goodman Septet.

These were followed by Cleo Laine and John Dankworth in an exquisite rendering of "Born on a Friday". The afternoon closed with Digby Fairweather playing "All I do is Dream of You. Thank you yet again to Dennis for an enjoyable programme.

Welcome to two new members to our group and look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Thursday 23rd February in the lounge of the Methodist Church

Mavis Pickett

Sunday Lunch Group



The next lunch has been changed from Sunday the 4th March to Sunday the 11th March; venue, the Kings Court Hotel, Alcester. Names please to Brian Bradley; tel: 01789 488551.

There will be no Sunday lunch in April.

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

Just a few tickets left!!!

Payment in now due!!!

Elgar Imperial March
Butterworth – Shropshire Lad
Finzi – Clarinet Concerto
Coates – London Calling
Monckton – the Arcadians

Wood – London Cameos
Katelbey – In a Monastery Garden
Farnon – Jumping Bean
Coates – Dancing Nights Waltz
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.

“SUMMER SERENADE”

Elgar – Serenade for Strings
Mozart – Sinfonia for violin and viola
Barber – Adagio
Dvorak – Serenade for Strings

Please sign up at the main meeting or phone Dorothy Jones to reserve a place. We need to pay for the tickets by 28th April. Send cheques made out to Heart of England U3A to 14 Ascot Close, Stratford-upon-Avon. CV379FN

Theatre Group



Big disappointment with “Nora” – it was cancelled the night before we were due to see it. This we due to a bereavement for the main male actor. Thankfully our system works and everyone was contacted before they set out. All money outlaid will be repaid.

Anne Boleyn - 28 April 2012

All the tickets for this have now been sold and most of the money had been paid. Please note the date is the 28 not 21 as stated in last month's newsletter. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. There is a waiting list if you would like to hope for a seat.

The Lady in The Van - 2 June 2012

All the tickets for this trip have now been signed-up for and the money is due (£28.50). Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 14th March 2012 at 10 a.m. prompt. This is a lovely easy walk and the route takes you by many of the historic treasures of Warwick. There are three flights of steps involved but no stiles.

The walk starts from Tesco in Warwick where we have been granted permission to park (Tesco is on the A445 Warwick to Leamington road)

I recommend good waterproof walking shoes as there is a little mud around and also bring a drink with you. I look forward to seeing you.

Valerie Redfern

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

Stratford – 28th March - Annual General Meeting.

Shotton – 6th March - AGM ; "Variety Theatre Entertainment" - John Tearne.

Dene Valley – 13th March – “The Story of Chedham’s Yard” - David Close.

Group Leaders Contact List		
<i>Group</i>	<i>Group Leader</i>	<i>Usual Meeting date (Monthly)</i>
All Swing and Jazz Group	Dennis Sully	4 th Thursday
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, After 2 nd March - Weekly
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	See All Swing & Jazz	
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

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please ensure that any copy for the April Newsletter is sent to the Newsletter Editor before 25th March