



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England U3A

New Website address:-
www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk

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May 2011 Newsletter

TODAY'S SPEAKER

The speaker today is Dr. Robert Edwards. He is going to tell us all about Samuel Cooper, the secret treasure in the history of art in England. His portraits of the Commonwealth and Restoration periods are extremely good.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

The speaker on 2nd June is Mrs Jean Draycott whose talk is on Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens and the restoration of this 17th century garden.

OUTING to Lord Leycester Hospital.

Due to a poor response I have cancelled the coach for the trip to the Lord Leycester Hospital. We will travel there in cars. Everyone who signed up for the trip has been contacted and all the other arrangements remain the same with a pick up at the Leisure Centre at 10.00.

At the Lord Leycester Hospital we will have coffee served by the Master's wife then the Master will give us a tour of the Hospital and the gardens.

We will have an hour and a half to get lunch in Warwick at either one of the many sandwich places, pubs or The Brethen's Kitchen attached to The Lord Leycester Hospital.

Then we meet at Hill Close Gardens – this is a ten minute walk from the Lord Leycester Hospital – we will have an introduction to the gardens which are a rare survival of Victorian gardens once used by townfolk to escape from the crowded town. We look at the gardens with a guide and then have tea and cake.

On Line Courses from National Office. –

Proposed new course to begin in the autumn.

“China – an introduction through history, culture and language.” More information about the course will be advertised in the next newsletter.

(It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop- Confucius.)

In September David Sladden reaches the end of his term as Treasurer and we will need a replacement. The Committee would like to co-opt a new Committee Member as Assistant Treasurer with a view to him or her taking on the role of Treasurer at the next AGM. If you are interested or would like more information please speak to David at a meeting or telephone him.

Invitation to all New Members. The Committee invites all of you who have joined Heart of England U3A since September 2010 to join us for afternoon tea in the Annex on **Friday 17th June from 2.30 pm.**

National Summer Schools: Information and application forms for the Summer Schools are on the notice board. The above may also be found on the national web site. www.u3a.org.uk (Members' area - events)

A special request from the committee:

Postage charges have increased substantially..

If there are any members receiving the monthly newsletter by post who have access to the internet and who would now be willing to see the newsletter via our Web Site, please would you contact the membership secretary Brian Bradley by e-mail. brianfrancestuts@aol.com

Also, all members, please let Brian know if your e-mail details change. Thank you!

Our Web address is: www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk

The PDF version of the newsletter on the web site is suitable for viewing and/or printing. Remember that if you do not have a PDF reader program on your computer, just click on the link provided on the "Newsletter" Section of the Website to download it - the program is free of charge!!

The newsletter is usually available on the web several days *before* the main meeting and paper copies are posted *after* the main meeting to members not attending the meeting.

Message for Interest Group Leaders: The next get-together for the Committee and Group Leaders will be held on **Friday, 6th May**, from 10am to 12 noon in the lounge.

Language College at Stratford Girls' Grammar School:

The Girls' Grammar School offers a range of courses at a reduced fee for U3A members. (£20 for 8 sessions). Italian for Beginners; Spanish at various levels; and French Conversation for Beginners and Advanced. If interested, please contact Sarah Parkinson at the School for further information. 01789 293879.

Proposed New Group - Tai Chi.



The T'ai Chi sessions will be held at the Priory Hall, opposite St. Gregory's church. 9.15 - 10.15a.m. Cost £5 per session. Any queries please ring Jackie Williams

New Discussion Group.

"On Wednesday 13th April, we had the first meeting of the Discussion Group, at the West End Pub on Bull Street.

Our first job was to choose "Let's Talk" as our name and then we agreed that we would discuss Current Affairs & we started with the Election System 'One Person, One Vote or Alternative Vote' The consensus was "If it ain't broke, why mend it?" We then discussed other topics like Libya & our Coalition Government. It was enjoyable and we agreed to meet again on Wed. May 11 at 1PM at the West End."

Athena. Roderick

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Art Appreciation Group



A few of us had a very worthwhile visit to Birmingham Art Gallery to see the exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite drawings.

Next month we are going to see Lynda Kettle's Exhibition at Preston Bagot.

If anyone is ever interested in joining us on one of our visits to art venues, do please contact me or Pat Wood as we would be pleased to include you, but we cannot promise to provide transport.

Phyllis Collins

Big Band Swing Jazz Group



The next meeting of the H of E Big Band Swing and Jazz Group is on on Tuesday 24th May 2011 at 2pm in The Lounge of The Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon. You are welcome to join in with us. We listen to recorded Big Band Swing and Jazz music. Our Group is a very informal and friendly mixed group of enthusiasts.

Dennis Sully

Bird Watching Group.



Following our meeting this month we have some exciting visits planned. The monthly meetings will be led by different members, who will plan the visits and disperse information to the group. We have some very knowledgeable members. Thank you in advance for sharing your knowledge and skills.

Dorothy Jones

Bridge Group



The Bridge Group is very friendly, very sociable and very keen to encourage new members. Following the life-long learning ethos of all U3As we can offer encouragement to "rusty" ex-players and, for complete beginners, separate introduction card play to get you started.

We meet every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Methodist Hall Side Room 1. Complete beginners can contact Ann Parker on 01789 205189 to arrange for introductory sessions.

John Yeomans

Chinwags



At the March Chinwags we were less than enthusiastic about the headline Robyn had seen: Cut the freebies. Make the pensioners pay. There was some sympathy for the view that while some are finding life very difficult at present, others could contribute to all or some of, for example, their National Health service treatment, rather than jumping queues by going private. The difficulty of arranging some form of voluntary or means tested share was recognised and we wound up rather inconclusively.

There was no Chinwags in April due to the fourth Monday falling at Easter. The next lunch will be on 23 May 12pm at Grants. As I will be away please let Gwyneth know your plans.

Aline Cumming

Classical Music Group



Howard offered us a pleasant mixture of familiar and less well known recordings. Chopin's Piano Concerto No1 was actually written after No2 but was published first. A welcome discovery for some of us. This was followed by four choral sections from Faure's Requiem. He said this was composed 'for the pleasure of it'. It has great charm and a gentle and original tone. After tea we heard Tchaikovsky's Orchestral Suite No3, we learnt that the composer preferred the freedom of this form in contrast to the restrictions of the symphony. There were some familiar echoes of the Nutcracker. We moved to Mozart Piano Concerto No21, two movements of a sunny popular work. Then we finished with the fourth movement of Saint Saens' Symphony No3, with organ, with brilliant orchestral and piano passages. Thank you Howard. Our next meeting on 10th May will be a 'bring your own' choice.

Aline Cumming

Computer Group At Stratford High School.



Sessions resume on Thursday 12th May.

A Beginners Course has been requested so if interested, please sign the sheet on the notice board table or contact Ron or Robyn. There are spaces available for this course. Several members from the "Cameras and Computers" Course will be returning for more tuition on this topic with the help of teacher Terry.

Robyn Nicoll

Cooks Club Group



The March meeting of the Cooks' Club took place on 27th March, when we sampled two very tasty and different dishes made with Quinoa grain, together with Orange Pekoe tea straight from a Sri Lankan plantation. Various favourite recipes were discussed and exchanged.

The next meeting will be on April 27th. There will be no meeting in May. If anyone would like to join us, please ring Chris Heaps.

Chris Heaps

Creative Craft Group



The April meeting project was Making Paper Beads from old envelopes and wrapping paper. A good way of recycling used materials and making pretty necklaces and bracelets. Best of all, the creative jewellery was completely Free!!!

Our next meeting is on the 19th May in the Annex 2pm.-4pm. The project will be Encaustic Art.

Roma Rudd

Card Making workshop



The card makers will be making Easel Cards at the next workshop **on Friday, 3rd June, 12.30 pm to 4.30 pm in the Annex**. The special papers and cards will be supplied. So come along and enjoy a buffet lunch as well as trying something different. No expertise necessary. Contact Carolyn Leach for more information.

Robyn Nicoll

Dinahs



May was mentioned, several of us needed to read more about this. Next Dinahs will be at the Le Bistrot Pierre on the 3rd May. We met at the Encore on the 5th April. Lots of chat while we got our drinks before going upstairs for our meal. A mix up with the menus caused a wee bit of a stir which sent us into a discussion about food and restaurants: The RSC restaurant was disappointing for a few; and the Il Moro on Greenhill Street was recommended. The food at the Encore is good.

A ghost story was told by Athena, Mothers Day was compared; Sandra was sat down to afternoon tea by her grandchildren: waiter service and menu; very enterprising!

AV referendum on the 5th May was mentioned, several of us needed to read more about this.

Next Dinahs will be at the Le Bistrot Pierre on the 3rd May.

Sylvia Crooks

Family History Group



The group meets on the third Thursday of the month at Stratford High School at 3.45pm.

We primarily use the Internet to research our Family Histories using Census returns and birth, marriage and death indexes, and there is always someone on hand to offer encouragement and advice on finding those mysterious relatives!

Our next meeting is March 17th. New members are always welcome.

Carol Styles

Grumpy Old Men Group



Female Emancipation - A good idea gone wrong? No! was the opinion of the Grumps but with some reservations. Resulting from the struggles of the Suffragette Movement, the effects of two World Wars, improved access to higher education the decline of heavy industry which saw "real man jobs" replaced by light assembly work more suited to the dexterity of women, and the active involvement of trade unions, female emancipation has advanced to the extent that freedom from political, social and legal restraint has now generally been achieved. Equal rights for men and women are no longer a distant ambition but is in most areas a reality enshrined in law. However we did have some problem with the moves to positive discrimination in favour of women in some areas for example all female shortlists for Parliamentary candidates. It was felt that this freedom had caused extra stress in the family unit with the difficulties of achieving a satisfactory work/life balance. Emancipation has undoubtedly enabled women to develop and maintain careers but apparently in a recent survey 68% of working women stated that they would prefer the more traditional "stay at home" role particularly during their childrens' early years if it wasn't for the economic reality of needing the money. All things considered we are quite happy for our women folk to be as emancipated as they like so that we can get on with the more pleasurable tasks of finding things to be grumpy about!

Grump of the Month was Tony Whiteley for his overall contribution and in particular his insight into numerous trade union activities that had helped to hasten female emancipation.

Next meeting - Wednesday 18 May. **Subject** – “Is the Judiciary having an exaggerated effect on life in this country”. (introduced by Derek Phillips).

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



We are continuing to enjoy ourselves, and are attempting to record our efforts, so that we can judge how we should. This is almost impossible to judge when we are concentrating on coming in at the right time!!! There is room if anyone else wants to join us.

Ron Castleton

History Group



At our April meeting Robin Sankey gave us a talk entitled “Slow Boat to Singapore”. In the early 1960’s there were still some small bits of the British Empire including the Protectorate of Brunei (part of Borneo). The inhabitants were getting restless under British Rule and the Gurkhas were having difficulty in controlling the rebels. There were problems in landing reinforcements in the area so some bright spark decided to send two landing vessels from England. Robin, who was in the Territorial Army at the time, was second-in-command of one of the vessels which set off in February 1963, sailing via the Mediterranean, Red Sea and Indian Ocean. He gave us a hilarious account of the journey – which seemed to involve parties in every port – until they arrived in Singapore in Mid-April only to discover they were no longer needed as the trouble had been settled.

At our meeting in May, Ann Davies (one of our own members) is going to talk about the Black Country and its Museum – 2pm on Monday, 9th May in the side room of the Methodist Hall. Everyone welcome.

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.

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



Gwyneth was our host again for our April Play Reading. The play we read this time was "An Inspector Calls" by J B Priestley.

There are 3 Acts in this play, we only had time for the 1st Act. Look forward to our next meeting on the 13th May at Gwyneth's.

Please give me a call if you wish to come along.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry & Prose Appreciation



The March Report which should have been in the April Newsletter is shown below – apologies from the Editor!!

Our study period for March was 1918 to 1940, which gave us such poets as Laurence Binyon, Edith Sitwell, Robert Frost, Roy Campbell, Hilaire Belloc, Edwin Brock, John Mansfield, John Betjeman, Charles Causley and E E Cummins. A most inspiring and thought provoking, not to mention emotional afternoon.

Ann Davies

Reading Group - Monday



This month we read “THE MASTER” by Colm Toibin. His psychological probe into the very complex dynamic of the Henry James family is sustained throughout. Unfortunately some of us were unable to finish the book before our meeting and will do so as it is so well written and absorbing. I can also recommend “Brooklyn” by the same author as again his insights

into the Irish psyche, in particular that of a young woman in the 1950s, is quite compelling. We are still hoping for some fresh faces.

Rosemarie Isaacson

Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we welcomed back Sandra after her extended holiday. We read our own choice of novel which always gives us a diverse selection of books. Sandra read THE WHITE QUEEN by P. Gregory, a historical novel, 'if you like history you would love it' Sheela recommended reading Notwithstanding by Louis de Bernieres, Stories of an English village. We spent a pleasant, sunny afternoon in Pat's garden in Shipston sipping tea and munching biscuits!

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group – Friday



We read The Beekeepers' Pupil by Sara George. This was written as a diary of a young man who went to work for Francois Huber at the end of the eighteenth century. Huber was blind but he was an expert on bees and he needed someone to conduct experiments and to write them up. Huber was a real person so a lot of the novel was fact. It was an easy read and for most of the book quite interesting. We all got a bit tired of the bees and wanted to know more about the social life of the people in the novel.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



We met as usual and had a varied programme of rock music that included music from one of the very earliest performers. We have room for more members so why not come along and see if you like it. Second Thursday of the month in the lounge of the Methodist Church

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



On April 8th we visited The Morgan Motor Company in Malvern. The company was founded by H.F.S. Morgan in 1909, it is still owned and run by the Morgan family.

In 1913 the first car was launched a three wheeler called the Morgan Runabout. Cars kept evolving and in 1937 the famous Four Four 4 wheeler

was developed. Many rallies were won in the 1950's with the Plus Four. Successful development continues to today with various roadsters like the Aero Max Coupe.

The cars are always hand built around an ash frame and a steel chassis. The ash frame gives unique strength and flexibility.

If you would like to order a car, the delivery time would be about one year. A great improvement on the recent past when it could be about seven years. Oh, and you can choose from 50,000 colours!!

13th May -- We will visit Soho House, home of Matthew Boulton. House Tour £3.50

Sandra Sladden

Shakespeare Group



Shakespeare

The last Shakespeare group meeting was held on Tuesday. The purpose of the meeting was to equip the members to reply to scoffers who say 'Of course, you realise Shakespeare never wrote his own plays!'. A spirited case was put up for Christopher Marlowe being Shakespeare

while I did my best to demolish arguments that the 17th Earl of Oxford wrote the plays. (The Oxfordians are a noisy lot who have propagated their views over the Internet.) The disadvantage both candidates share is that they died before many or most of the plays were written. The case for the other possibilities is so slender as to be not worth considering. What did emerge is the debt Shakespeare owed to Marlowe: they must have known each other in the early days of the London theatre.

I think and hope we have all enjoyed the last few years. I shall miss our sessions but I'm hoping to relieve my ignorance of Chaucer's works (which Shakespeare borrowed from twice at least).

Jess Monk

Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group



The next meeting of the Stratford Swingers is on Thursday 26th May 2011 at 2pm in The Lounge of The Methodist Church , Old Town, Stratford upon Avon. You are welcome to join in with us. We listen to recorded Big Band Swing and Jazz music. Our group is a very informal and friendly mixed group of enthusiasts.

Dennis Sully

Sunday Lunch Group



The next Sunday lunch will be on the 5th June at the Royal Oak, Whatcote. Please telephone Brian Bradley on 01789 488551.

Brian Bradley

Theatre Group & Outings



Our next visit to Malvern is on Saturday 14 May 2011 to see Jeffrey Barnard is Unwell with Robert Powell in the lead. There are seven tickets left for this trip. The cost is £27.50.

Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. My mobile number for the day only is 07818820207.

On 9 June it is the Opera, Cosi Fan Tutti by Mozart. There are eight tickets left for this trip. It costs £45.50 and has rave reviews.

Leaving the Leisure Centre at 5.30 and Henley at 5.45

I have not booked any further theatres until the end of August as I have not seen anything that I think will suit us.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



There will not be a walk in May as most of the walkers seem to be away and therefore no one is available to lead the walk.

Look forward to seeing you in June

Valerie Redfern

Yoga with Shottery U3A

Exercise, gentle stretches, relaxation!!

Classes re-start on Wednesday 11th May, 9.45 – 10.45am at Lifeways, Albany Road, Stratford upon Avon.

Could this be for you? Then why not enjoy a taster session for £4 only. For bookings ring 01789-204 905 or email annesummersby@hotmail.co.uk.

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

Stratford– 25th May - Mary Bloxham – “Being one of triplets”.

Shottery – 7th June - Trevor Baylis - "Inventor and Stuntman"

DeneValley –. 10th May - Jill Fraser - “How to Survive an English Vicarage”.

| Group Leaders Contact List | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Group</i> | <i>Group Leader</i> | <i>Usual Meeting date (Monthly)</i> |
| Art Appreciation | Phyl Collins Pat Wood | 3 rd Friday 2pm |
| Big Band Music & Jazz | Dennis Sully | 4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm |
| Bridge | John Yeomans | Every Tuesday 2.30pm |
| Chinwags Luncheon Group | Aline Cumming | 4 th Monday 12 Noon |
| Choir | Tony Griffiths | 12 noon, Fortnightly |
| Classical Music | Aline Cumming | 2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm |
| Cooks Club | Chris Heaps | 4 th Wednesday |

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| 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 |
| Family History – Genealogy | Carol Styles | 3 rd Thursday – 4.00 pm |
| Gardening Group | Dorothy Bonham | 2 nd Tuesday |
| Grumpy Old Men Group | Robert Chorley | 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 |
| Let's Talk Discussion Group | Athena Roderick | As appropriate |
| 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 | Jackie 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 |
| Shakespeare's Life & Works | Jess Monk | 2 nd Tuesday – 10.00 am |
| Stratford Swingers | Dennis Sully | 4 th Thursday |
| Symphony Hall Visits | Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins | As appropriate |
| Tai Chi | Jackie Williams | To be announced |
| Theatre Visits & Outings | Coral Bradley | As appropriate |
| Walking | Valerie Redfern | 2 nd Wednesday |

TEA ROTA - 2011

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| May | Shakespeare's Life & Works Group |
| June | Dinah's Luncheon Group |
| July | Keep Fit Group |
| August | Bridge Group |
| September | Creative crafts Group |
| October | U3A Choir |
| November | History Group |
| December | Pilates Group |