



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Web Address:-

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Heart of England

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December 2016 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

Our speaker for December is Alan Cutler, his topic is Judge & Jury. Alan presents Victorian murder trials after which the jury, the audience, find the accused guilty or not guilty. Would they have sent an innocent man to the gallows, or set a murderer free?

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for January is our own Geoff Bridgewater and his talk is about his family involved in the kinder transport at the start of World War 2. "A Viennese Tragedy"

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Dorothy Jones

The Christmas lights have been switched on. They brighten up gloomy December evenings. The committee wish everyone a very merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you looking hale and hearty in January.

NEW YEAR LUNCH 2017

Christmas is nearly here and it is a busy time for everybody, so can we remind you that our New Year Lunch will be on January 21st 2017 at Pierres Bistrot, Swan's Nest Hotel, gathering in Reception for mid-day, starting lunch at 12.30. Don't forget to pick up your name card in Reception so that you can put it on the table of your choice. Committee Members will be meeting and greeting and they are there to provide help with seating arrangements. Price this year is £17; cheques made out to HOE U3A and handed in at this meeting or sent to Athena Roderick 17 Gifford Walk, SOA CV37 9LN. This includes the staff tip and a raffle prize of lunch for 2 at Pierres and also a quiz, with a small prize. As always, there are 3 courses, each with a choice from 3 dishes, including vegetarian & gluten free options. All great value and a really good way to start off our year. Come and join us and we are looking forward to seeing you there.

DIARIES

There are still some U3A diaries available from Sue Tringham, priced at £2.00.

EMAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER & MAGAZINE ENTIRES.

We now have a special email address to which you should send any reports, notices, photographs, etc. for the Newsletter and Magazine. It is a shared email address for both Edwin and Sandy. Just reply to the monthly reminder email and it will come to the correct address.

The address is: edwinsandy@gmx.com

COURSES ON-LINE-FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

Robyn Nicoll



There is a vast list of courses available which may be found on the National U3A Web site. For a detailed list, you will need to access the Members' Area by creating a user name and password. **National Web site:** www.u3a.org.uk

There are also a large selection of courses offered by **U3A Online** from Australia described as "A Virtual University of the Third Age". Courses are offered for individual study and for groups.

(For an individual - \$25; For an Organisation - \$15.)

The topics include: World Affairs and History; Nature; Writing and Creativity; Lifestyle; Science. (See the notice board for a detailed list)

To find out more about these courses : www.u3aonline.org.au

A course from U3A Online is about to begin - "Property to Partner". See Jayne Jones or Sue Workman for details.

NB The original free Untutored Courses have been downloaded and saved so are available to members. A list of these courses may be found on the notice board.

Courses studied so far: Garden History, Art History, and China History Ancient and Modern and Russian History. A second Garden History Course is being studied.

For more details about courses, please contact Robyn (redbird22@hotmail.co.uk)

[NB: Do look at the National Web site to see all the opportunities and information available to U3A members.]

CHINA DISCUSSION GROUP

Robyn Nicoll

At our November get-together we began with a powerpoint presentation by Norma who showed some photos illustrating the talk she gave last month on the ancient building complex in Wudang Mountains. Then we all participated in a practical session, prepared by Patricia, using paint and brushes to write Happy Christmas in Chinese characters aiming to use the stroke order discussed last meeting. We all agreed that we would like more painting practice next time. Jayne then presented her chosen World Heritage Site, Pingyao, the smallest province in China, followed by Patricia's choice, Chengde, and finally Lisl's dramatic talk about the red rocks and rainbow ridges of Zhangye Danxia.

After the Christmas break we will meet on **Friday afternoon, 20th January, 2.30-4.30 in the lounge.**

Our get-togethers are informal and varied consisting of a short language/practical session led by Patricia Wy, followed by discussion of the chosen topic often accompanied by a photo presentation and concluding with "what the papers say". If you would like to join us, please contact Robyn.

More information from Robyn Nicoll: redbird22@hotmail.co.uk or David Ralph.: david.ralph@icloud.com

ALL SWING & JAZZ GROUP

Mavis Pickett



Report of the October 2016 Meeting.

John Cooper was both our presenter and preparer of this month's programme, and he certainly gave us a range of tracks to keep our interest. He ranged from Big Band with Glen Miller, Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington, which he interspersed with way back names of Ma Rainey, Kid Orey and Big Bill Broozy before slipping in a bit of British trad with Acker Bilk and Chris Barber and he even found space for a Gerry Mulligan track as well as the three beautiful voices of Ella, Sarah and Billy. John I think we should start wearing appreciation badges in your honour, 'we love John' might be a bit much but 'Cool Dude' would fit the bill. Our December meeting will be on the 15th and it will be a joint meeting with the Rock and Roll Group and the Classical Music Group to introduce us to each other and to share our love of music. It's worth coming.. it's Christmas and to the jazz Group that means **Mince Pies**. We meet in the Lounge of the Methodist Church in Old Town starting at 2p.m.

ART APPRECIATION

Sylvia Kentish / Pam Collins



We held our annual quiz in November, hosted by Phyl Collins. As usual this proved to be a an enjoyable mix of questions, information and discussions. Judith Fogg was our winner.

Next month we will meet for our Christmas lunch.

BRIDGE GROUP

John Yoemans



We play in a relaxed atmosphere and are always keen to welcome new members with some experience of the game. If you would like to "try us out" please come as a guest so that you can decide if you would like to join the Group. We meet every Tuesday afternoon for a two and a half hour session starting at 2.00 pm in the Methodist Hall Side Room 1, next to the kitchen.

CHINWAGS

Aline Cumming



We are still at Le Bistro Pierre where good food, chat and laughter are on the menu.

THE CHOIR

Dorothy Jones



We only have two more rehearsals before our Christmas concert. Stewart has planned a super programme and we are looking forward to entertaining you .If you haven't a ticket for the concert on December 16th you will be most welcome at Briarcroft residential apartments on December 23rd at 2-30pm ,when we will be repeating our programme. We look forward to seeing you.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Aline Cumming



For December we plan to have a combined meeting with the All That Swing & Jazz and Rock and Roll groups at the Methodist church.

Thursday 15th December, 2.00pm, The Lounge.

COMPUTER GROUP

Robyn Nicoll



We are taking a break over the Winter but intend to resume in the Spring.

You may register your interest by signing the sheet on the notice board table. The dates will be advertised as soon as booking is confirmed and all those interested will be contacted.

The course will be held at the Parish Centre, 2.30 to 4.00 on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays and will cover topics for **tablets and laptops**.

If you are able to come as a helper please *let Robyn know*. (redbird22@hotmail.co.uk)

CREATIVE CRAFTS

Tricia Callaghan



At the November meeting we used small squares of fabric pressed into a polystyrene ring to make an attractive Christmas decoration. See the display of wreaths in the foyer today. We also collected items for the stall at the Church's Bazaar on the following Saturday. The joint Crafters and Card Makers stall raised £63.70 which was donated to the Church.

Next meeting: Thursday, 15th December, 2pm – 4pm, in the new room.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Edwin Lilly

The November meeting was held in The Lounge at the Methodist Church Hall where members' photographs from the October meeting were reviewed and commented on. Geoff has asked the members to take photographs during

the period up to and over Christmas of decorations, lights, and other seasonal items and bring them on a memory stick to the next meeting in January. If you need help please ask.

DINAHS

Sylvia Crooks



Dinahs last had lunch together on the 1st of November at the Red Lion. After A hearty meal, there was a lot of talking going on as usual : Retirement homes, new homes built with wood. In DurrIDGE Bay, Northumberland, there are many homes built with wood. Technical College was a topic for debate. They were closed about the same time as Skill Centres, sadly.

We next meet on Tuesday the 6th December at the Vintner for an early Christmas lunch.

DISCUSSION GROUP

Athena Roderick



As everybody, everywhere seemed to be talking about “Trump” that is where we started. We felt that it had been an appalling campaign, with no real policies being proposed & just a slanging match. How could a modern country field 2 such divisive candidates, we wondered. Was it just the media re-
porting or did the 2 candidates have so much money that it took precedence over less wealthy & more suitable people? Trump was felt to be a self-publicist & rather chameleon like. His valedictory speech was very different from his campaigning speeches. We wondered if this result, along with Brexit, pointed to disaffection with politics as we know it & ‘the people’ wanting something different from the ruling elite. We felt it will be very interesting to see how much real power Trump will have, with 2 Houses to keep him in order. Or will USA finish up with a mad Dictator that nobody can control. We hoped that his very clever business brain might just make him not such a bad President, after all. Fingers crossed. We also talked about a report ‘talked up’ by Alan Milburn. It is saying that Westminster has no experience of running health services & should leave it to the experts. That the way the NHS is organised is hindering it’s ability to work properly. It needs a gradual evolution. We certainly feel that nurses shouldn’t be trained in universities, but on the job & there should be more of them & better paid. Also, there are 5 major productions of King Lear this year & Greg Doran has likened Lear to Brexit, a powerful ruler, in trying to share out power, wrecks his country, his family & his health. An interesting concept.

We meet again on December 14 @12.30 at The Windmill.

FILM GROUP

Mary Fishleigh



At the November meeting we ran the film Shadowlands starring Sir Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger. Made in 1993 it told the true love story between C S Lewis and American Joy Gresham. It was very well received by a full house, (albeit with tissues in hands). If you fancy a relaxing afternoon come and join us, we endeavour to show all genre of films. We meet the **2nd** Tuesday of each month in the lounge of the Methodist Church, starting at 2p.m

GAMES GROUP—SCRABBLE, DOMINOES AND CARDS

Sue Tringham



We had a full house at 2 Guild Cottages for our first meeting in November. It was a bit snug but fun! Meeting dates in December will be the 5th and 19th from 2 – 4pm. We may be festive on the 19th !! For the time being we will continue to meet at 2 Guild Cottages. All welcome!

GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP

Suzy Genge



We all met in the Church Street Hotel for coffee and then went for a tour around New Place . Fortunately, most of us had free tickets as we lived in Stratford. There was a very good introductory talk about the garden and house and the weather was dry, although rather chilly. We admired the statues and the knot garden, as well as the information inside.

Next month is at Stratford Garden centre on 5th December.

GRUMPY OLD MEN GROUP

Graham Mitchell



At the November meeting a near record number of some 19 souls, including 2 new members, gathered to consider whether “The Press of today, particularly investigative journalism, is an instrument for good or bad”. Initially the discussion covered the negative aspects such as not properly checking

the facts or sources of their stories, the toxic effect of innuendo, allegations and untruths, unwarranted character assassination, biased reporting etc., etc. On the positive side, the Group felt the Press had a very good record on the exposure of misdemeanours of all types such as child abuse, drugs in sport and many more, campaigns against injustice, the support of good causes, the in-depth analysis of current affairs and world wide news coverage. Sometimes the methods used to get a story could be considered very questionable and in some cases deemed as "entrapment" and not "in the public interest" (as is so often the defence employed by the Press) but, despite this, the Grumps were adamant that a "free press", such as exists in the UK, must be maintained and guarded at all cost and on balance the good far outweighed the bad.

Next meeting - Wed. 21st Dec. Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - Festive Fun for All. Master of Ceremonies - Cyril Willoughby

HISTORY GROUP

Jean Hicks



November's talk was given by Jim Dobson and was entitled "Iona and its Community".

Jim talked about the geography of the island, what it means to him and it's long history.

Iona is one of Scotland's smallest inhabited islands yet it's historical significance is enormous. It was here that St Columba founded his monastery --- a major influence in the spread of Christianity. Iona's spiritual importance still endures, enhanced by the foundation of the Iona Community in 1938. The talk was illustrated by some beautiful slides of Jim's visits to the island.

Next meeting: December 12th.....Christmas Party and Quiz....with shared buffet.

KEEP FIT GROUP

Mary Palmer



The Keep Fit Class is now full to capacity after a bit of a dip in numbers last year. We have a new instructor who keeps us active and we all think we feel much better for our efforts. A waiting list has now been started if anyone is interested. Please phone Mary Palmer on 204707.

PAINTING/DRAWING GROUP

Dorothy Jones



The group have done some super paintings and drawings. We will be displaying our work at the main meeting in January.

PILATES GROUP - MONDAY



Weekly at St. Andrew's Parish Centre, Shottery, 12:15 to 1:15. For more information call Gill Ganner on 269657.

PILATES GROUP - WEDNESDAY



Weekly at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Shottery, 10.15 to 11.15. For more information call Sue Workman on 297061.

PLAY READING GROUP

Sylvia Crooks



We last met on the 17th November. We read a comedy, "Cup Final" by Charles Mander. Enjoyed by all. We next meet on Thursday 15th December : because Choir are rehearsing on the morning of the 15th, we will meet at Sylvia's at 2.30pm for mince pies.

READING GROUP—MONDAY

Phyllis Bailey



Our November book was *Merivel*..by Rose Tremain. I was surprised few had come across this famous author before. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and had a lively discussion. Having watched some of the Versailles programmes recently on television-this We would strongly recommend it .enlightened parts of the story. although some of the events might shock those unfamiliar with language and norms of behaviour in those days.

READING GROUP—WEDNESDAY

Dorothy Jones



This month we read “SHOP GIRL” by Mary Portas. The novel begins with her childhood and closes as she is working in the window dressing department at Harrods.

There she encountered Lady Diana, Mohammed Ali and many more V.I.P.s. The most moving moment in the book is when Mary was 16 and her mother died of Meningitis.

Comments from the group ".An easy read but soon forgotten!" " A nostalgic fest". " A determined lady" "A testament to survival"

We always enjoy our meetings ,have a good chat and love our tea and delicious cakes!

READING GROUP - FRIDAY

Coral Bradley



We had a challenge this month with a book which had won the Costa Prize so we should have been warned. The book was “H is for Hawk” by Helen Macdonald. It is a true story where she is suffering a bereavement after the death of her father but she really wallows in this. To help herself she buys a goshawk to train. While doing this she follows a book written by someone in the eighteenth century and we had great chunks of that in her book. She only feels better when the hawk finally kills just for the sake of it. Only two of our members finished the book which they found very depressing.

ROCK AND ROLL GROUP

Coral Bradley



We had a very successful meeting with some new members which is good. The programme covered several artists from the 50's and sixties with just a couple of more modern songs. Next month we will meet on Thursday 15th December in the same place and we will have a programme from the jazz group, the classical music group and of course some rock and roll. Don't miss it.

SCIENCE, NATURE & ‘ALL THINGS’ TECHNICAL GROUP

Edwin Lilly



At our meeting on Friday 11th November Aline showed a DVD entitled “Big, Bigger, Biggest”. This described the development of taller and taller towers.

The USA wanted to build a tall tower to commemorate their first President, George Washington. The Washington Memorial, as it became known, was started before the Civil War, was stalled during the fighting, and had to contend with less than perfect foundations from the first build. It finished up at a height of 554 feet instead of a design target of 600 feet.

The Eiffel Tower in Paris was an early contender at a height of 1063 feet and was made of wrought iron in a lattice formation. It was very successful and is still standing. It has to be painted every few years.

The CN Tower in Toronto was the next tallest tower, completed in 1976. At 1815 feet it is a very tall steel reinforced concrete building.

Canton Tower in China was completed in 2009 and opened in 2010. It was designed by a Dutch team headed by Mark Hemel and Barbara Kuit. Height is 1954 feet. Material is steel with a waisted form.

The December meeting on Friday 9th December will be from 1.30 to 4.30pm with the Quiz starting at 2.00pm. Please agree your share of the party food with Heather Bridgewater.

Friday 13th January 2017 Talk on “Paint and how it covers a multitude of sins”; organised by Ian.

Friday 10th February 2017 Talk on “The Unbelievable Mysteries of the Universe” given by Geoff.

Friday 10th March 2017 Talk “Say Cheese” by Ian.

SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

Brian Bradley



The next lunch is on Sunday 4th. December 2016 at the Stratford Golf Club. Usual time, 12 for 12.30. Names please to Brian Bradley, Tel: 01789 488551.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS

Dorothy Jones

Our February visit to the Symphony Hall has been cancelled. The deadline to pay for tickets is December 20th. When the newsletter went to print I only had one payment.

We enjoyed our last visit in November and look forward to our next visit 24th May 2017. 2-15pm

The Programme — MOZART Symphony No 31(Paris)
 DVORAK Cello Concerto in B minor
 SCHUMANN Symphony No1 (Spring)

The cost of this visit will be £36. This includes the cost of the ticket and return coach to the Symphony Hall.

Please make cheques out to Heart of England U3A and send to Dorothy Jones. I will start taking payment in January 2017.

THEATRE GROUP.

Coral Bradley



On 10th December we go to Malvern to see "Sister Act". All the tickets for this have been sold. We meet at the usual times, 12.00 in Henley and 12.30 at the Leisure Centre.

Our next trip is also to Malvern this time to see "The Verdict". Clive Mantle and Jack Shepherd are the main actors and it promises to be a good play.

The date is 28 January, cost to be announced later.

WALKING GROUP

Valerie Redfern



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 14th December 2016 at 10.00 a.m. and start from Ilmington village Green (it is just passed the red Lion Inn Map 151/213435. We can park on the roadside next to the green). It is a medium walk slightly shorter than usual mainly on country lanes with some magnificent views.

I have chosen this walk as they have opened a community shop and café and I thought it would be rather pleasant to have coffee and mince pie after the walk and support the facility.

I recommend good walking shoes or boots and bring a drink along with you.

WHAT'S ON – MONTHLY MEETINGS AT STRATFORD, SHOTTERY, DENE VALLEY AND ALCESTER U3AS.

Stratford – No details for the December meeting.
Shottery - 6th December – Social Meeting with in-house entertainment.
Dene Valley - 6th December - "Christmas Histories" – Greg Chapman.
Alcester - 6th December - "The Swinging Sixties" – Ray Sturdy.

HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
December 2016	Dinah's Luncheon Group	March 2017	The Choir
January 2017	SNATTs Group	April 2017	Garden Appreciation Group
February 2017	History Group	May 2017	Painting & Drawing Group

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>GROUP LEADER</u>	<u>USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)</u>
All That Swing & Jazz	Brian Bradley	4th Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
AmDram & Supper	Geoff Bridgewater	As Announced
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins	3rd Friday 2.00pm
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.00pm
Card Making	Carolyn Leach	As Announced
China Discussion Group	Robyn Nicoll	See Newsletter
Chinwags Lunch	Aline Cumming	4th Monday 12.00 noon
Choir	Ruth Grahame Dorothy Jones	Every Friday 10.30—12.00 noon
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	3rd Monday 2.00pm
Creative Crafts	Tricia Callaghan	3rd Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
Computers	Robyn Nicoll	2nd & 4th Wednesday 2.30—4.00pm
Digital Photography	Geoff Bridgewater	To be decided.
Dinah's Luncheon	Sylvia Crooks	1st Tuesday for lunch
Discussion	Athena Roderick	2nd Wednesday
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett	2nd Tuesday 2.00pm
Games –Scrabble, Dominoes and Cards	Sue Tringham	1st & 3rd Monday 2.00—4.00pm
Garden Appreciation Group	Suzy Genge	2nd Tuesday
Grumpy Old Men	Graham Mitchell	3rd Wednesday for lunch
History	David Dumper	2nd Monday 2.00pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday 10.00am
Painting/Drawing	Dorothy Jones Sue Butler	As Announced
Pilates - Monday	Gill Ganner	Every Monday 12.15—1.15pm
Pilates - Wednesday	Sue Workman	Every Wednesday 10.15—11.15am
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	See Newsletter for dates
Poetry Reading	Jennifer Davey	2nd Wednesday 10.00—12.00noon
Reading - Monday	Phyllis Bailey	3rd Monday 2.30—4.30pm
Reading - Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	3rd Wednesday 2.30pm
Reading - Friday	Coral Bradley	As Appropriate
Rock & Roll Music	Coral Bradley	2nd Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
Science, Nature & All Things Technical	Geoff Bridgewater	2nd Friday 2.00—4.00pm
Sunday Lunch	Brian Bradley	As Appropriate
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones	As Appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	As Appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	2nd Wednesday 10.00am