



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Web Address:-
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Heart of England

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October 2016 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

Our speaker for October will be a volunteer from the National Arboretum.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our talk for November is entitled 'Over 75 Project'. The Prime of Life: 75+ Project is dedicated to helping to deliver proactive services to improve socialisation and isolation, reduce patient dependence on GPs in the ageing population, and increase patient self-care and well being.

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Dorothy Jones

Jayne and I are sharing the role of Chair of Heart of England U3A. We are aware that we are following in the footsteps of six highly regarded Chairs.

Sadly, our first Chairman, Ron Castleton, died peacefully at his home on Saturday 17th September. A funeral service will be held at Alveston Church at 11.30am on Thursday 6th October with refreshments after at 12.45 at St Margaret Court.

In January 2001 Ron and a small committee met to form a new U3A. Jackie Checketts chaired this meeting as she was chair of Stratford U3A, which then had a waiting list of ninety. The first meeting of Heart of England U3A was on May 3rd 2001 when Ron became Chairman and Editor of our newsletter. He was a committee member until two years ago when he became a co-opted member. Under his guidance we have gone from strength to strength and we will always remember Ron with great respect and affection.

NEW MEMBERS

It was suggested at our committee meeting that we should have a new members informal Tea & Chat meeting. If you have joined Heart of England during the last year do come along and meet some of the committee and possibly some group leaders, and make new friends. This will be on November 15th at 2-30pm in the reception area .

PIANO PLAYING

Margaret Dews (Stratford-upon-Avon U3A) is trying to set up a piano playing support group. If you used to play the piano but haven't for years, or would like the motivation to practise and improve your playing - and maybe even gain enough confidence to play for the pleasure of others, then this is for you. Heart of England members warmly welcome.

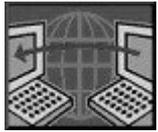
The aim is to meet once a month in the Methodist Church committee room where there is a nice piano: £2 a time should cover the cost of the room. We would all come with one or two short pieces to play. The others would be encouraging and supportive! This helps gradually to overcome the terror we can feel at playing in public, as well as introducing pieces we may not have tried or even heard before. There would be the opportunity to talk about the pieces, the composers, the difficulties and so on.

Any level of playing is welcome, however basic or shaky. But it's not for brilliant pianists, please - that would be too daunting! The only requirement, apart from enthusiasm, is to have regular access to a piano or keyboard.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Margaret via km27dews@gmail.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

The Australia U3A offer a large selection of topics which may be studied individually or in a small group as we have done previously but with an annual charge to sign up. (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)

NB The original free Untutored Courses have been downloaded and saved so are available to members as before. A list of these courses may be found on the notice board. These courses may be forwarded to members via e-mail or transferred to a memory device. These courses are ideal for a small group to study together.

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.]

THE CHINA DISCUSSION GROUP

Robyn Nicoll

At our September get-together we had the final presentation of the Provinces by David Ralph who had chosen Yunnan Province. This is one of the largest Provinces in China, situated in the far south west of the country; a mountainous area renowned for its diversity of plant life and richness in minerals. It is home to 25 ethnic minority communities who maintain their folk traditions and customs. Yunnan is a popular tourist destination. Our next project is to research the World Heritage Sites with over 50 from which to choose.

Next meeting: Friday afternoon, 21st October, 2.30 to 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@ralphhome.com

ALL SWING & JAZZ GROUP

Mavis Pickett



Report of the August 2016 Meeting.

Do you remember when your record collection was composed of a pile of 7 inch 45rpm discs; usually they were strewn all over the floor. I well member John Cooper gave us a treat this month with 20 tracks from his extensive 45rpm. collection. (Obviously well looked after). The afternoon began with a 1923 recording of King Oliver playing "Snake Rag" followed by a 1927 recording of Jimmy Blythe's "Have Mercy" we were then set for a helter skelter of tracks dating from the 1920's up to the 1950's, these included Ida Cox singing "Graveyard Dream Blues" recorded in 1923 to Ella Fitzgerald with "The Lady is a Tramp" from 1954. The time swing kept on coming with tracks from the late 50's back to the early 20's. The first half of the programme finished with The Swingle Singers with "Fugue 5 in D Major" by J. S. Bach. After the coffee break it was back to the 50's with Big Bill Broonzy and "Back Water Blues". Keeping with the watery theme John followed this with Chris Barber and "Down by the Riverside, intentional or not this was followed by Muddy Waters with "Honey Bee" Then it was a dip into Bix Beiderbecke and "Ostrich Walk" (I'd love to know how these Works get their names). We were then treated to tracks by Gerry Mulligan Quartet, Glenn Miller, Gene Krupa and the (to me) sublime Cleo Laine singing "It was a Lover and his Lass". The afternoon finished with a full orchestral playing of "Dans Les Rue D'Antibes" fronted by Sidney Bechet. John you inspired me to search out my E.P's I found 17 in all including a freebie of The Ovaltineys theme tune. Thank you John from all of our group for a great afternoon, including your 'asides'. All are welcome to join us we meet on the **4th** Thursday of the month in the lounge of the Methodist Church Hall in Old Town starting at 2p.m.

ART APPRECIATION

Sylvia Kentish / Pam Collins



In our September meeting we viewed two videos. One took us through Caravaggio's final years, with interesting details of his years in Naples and Malta, and the powerful art he produced during his exile from Rome. The second was an entertaining review of the life and work of Dame Laura Knight, the first woman to be appointed to the Royal Academy, who, we saw, was feisty and funny as well as being extremely talented. She and her husband were key members of the Newlyn artists group, and she was well respected for her portrayals of diverse subjects, including circus life, the ballet, and Britain in wartime. In October we will be visiting Upton House.

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.

CARD MAKING GROUP

Carolyn Leach



Our next local charity to support is the Dementia Café Stratford. We hope to sell Christmas cards at the October meeting as well as our usual greeting cards. Our next work-shop will be on Oct 28th 12.30 - 4.30pm

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 have started rehearsing our concert programme. The date of our next concert is Friday 16th December, 2pm--3-30pm, in the Methodist Church Hall. Tickets £5 (including Tea & cake) will be on sale at the main meetings or available from Choir members. Come along and join us in some of the carols.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Aline Cumming



We began our programme of European composers with Johan Strauss II, the Overture to Die Fledermaus then the Radetzky March celebrating a battle won by the Austrian army. The 4th movement of Schubert's string quartet Death and the Maiden followed, then ballet music from the opera La Gioconda, the Dance of the Hours by a neglected composer – Ponchielli. One of Dvorak's Slavonic Dances was composed for orchestra but rearranged for cello and piano by the composer himself. We reopened after tea with the Overture to the Bartered Bride by Smetana, then Part 5 of Sinfonietta by Janacek, atonal in parts and not enjoyed by all! Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata for violin and piano, 3rd movement proved more acceptable. We finished with Capriccio Espanol, two lively parts by Rimsky Korsakov.

We have moved the October meeting to Thursday 13 October as I am away for the normal Monday.

COMPUTER GROUP

Robyn Nicoll



The computer course at the Parish Centre is underway with 12 members attending and several experienced members coming to lend a hand. We all benefit from learning from each other.

This course is covering topics for **tablets and laptops**.

If you are able to offer some time and expertise for the course *please let Robyn know.* red-bird22@hotmail.co.uk

Dates booked in October and November: Oct 12th and 26th. Nov 23rd.

CREATIVE CRAFTS

Robyn Nicoll for Tricia Callaghan



Christmas is coming!! We will be joining with the Card Making Group to prepare a table of crafts and cards at the Methodist Church Christmas Bazaar on **Saturday, 19th November**. At the September meeting some members were busy making small fabric wreaths using Christmas fabric and wadding while others were creating crocheted brooches. We will be continuing to produce more stock for the stall at the next meeting on **Thursday, 20th October, 2.00pm to 4.00pm** in the new room.

DINAHS

Sylvia Crooks



We met in September at the Red Lion again. A warm welcome from the staff and lots of chat about a holiday on the Douro with Titan, well recommended. Concern about the begging in Stratford, also a worry when the town has lots of empty shops and when they re-open, high-end clothes and high-end jewellers and more cafes and restaurants than any town needs. Keep watching quizzes on television, especially University Challenge, one of us found they knew the answers because of their age. If you are looking for good and recommended eye drops "I Caps" could be for you!! We will all get together again on Tuesday 4th October, 12.15 pm at the Red Lion.

DISCUSSION GROUP

Athena Roderick



The Palace of Westminster was our starting point. *Most people felt that the iconic building should be kept, as it is our heritage & brings in tourists. There was one dissenting voice, mine. £4 billion is an awful lot of money & doubtless won't be the end total. As Britain seems to be moving towards becoming federal, will we need so many MPs in London. We then looked at the rebuilding of Westminster, the 2 Houses of Parliament, as some commentators think that it has worked well for centuries & should carry on as usual. While others, one being a female MP, feel that it is too confrontational & rather like a playground for naughty children. Maybe the pattern that they have in Holyrood, which is semi-circular would serve better. If there are to be fewer MPs, we thought that some of the building could be used for accommodating MPs thus cutting down the high expenses we pay. We definitely feel that The Lords should be radically reduced. Quite a heated discussion. We then talked about "The Green Belt" & the proposals to ease planning permission in some areas. The proposals for "appropriate small scale sites including starter homes for young families, play areas, schools etc". seems ideal as long as developers aren't allowed to "cherry pick" the best sites. They should be forced to take care of the infrastructure of the area where they are expanding. Our next meeting will be Wed Oct 12th.*

FILM GROUP

Mary Fishleigh



In September we tried a German film with subtitles. This had received much praise for the writer and director, Fassbinder. The film, *The Merchant of Four Seasons*, was a very dark film in a similar vein to *Death of a Salesman*, but the standard of acting and filming was not nearly as good. As we try to avoid showing current releases and to explore different genres and languages, we are always looking for inspirational ideas. This one seemed to fit the bill but fell short of our ideal. It was good practice for our German language!

We have room for some more members. Do come along and join us in watching some different and some classic films. We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Methodist Church lounge at 2pm.

GAMES GROUP—SCRABBLE, DOMINOES AND CARDS

Sue Tringham



The number of people attending the Games group has dwindled so I have decided that it is not feasible to meet at the Methodist Church. There will be no Games Group in October but I will be in contact with members to plan a way forward. However, I believe there is a games group run by the Methodist Church on a Friday which may offer a suitable alternative.

GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP

Jayne Jones



Anne Hathaway's Cottage was the destination for our September outing. Coffee & cakes at the lovely tearoom first - of course! We were blessed by warm & sunny weather. A tour of the house & a leisurely stroll around the woodland walk following the sculpture trail made for a relaxing morning. What lovely gardens to have on our doorstep!

GRUMPY OLD MEN GROUP

Graham Mitchell



The discussion topic for the September gathering, attended by 16 members, was "Has Rio 2016 put the Great back in Great Britain". The Group were unanimous in their praise of the achievements of Team GB's Olympic and Paralympic athletes and were in no doubt that they had a positive effect on GB's visibility and standing in the world of sport. However, relative to world affairs in general, it was felt that it would have little effect on enhancing the status of Great Britain which according to some Grumps had been diminished by the Brexit vote. While recognising the hard work and dedication of all involved with Team GB sadly the Grumps concluded that Rio 2016 had not really changed the perceived status of the country worldwide but were adamant that Britain is still great and is alive and well.

Next meeting - Wed. 19th October - Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - Are some large national charities becoming too political. Introduction - ALL.

HISTORY GROUP

David Dumper



Our speaker in September was Richard Pearson, archivist at KES Stratford. Although the subject of his talk was to be based upon the boys of KES who fought in two world wars of the 20th century his preamble exploring the staff, pupils and structure was illuminating. Using many photos of the school taken from 1860 through to 1939 Richard was able to portray how influential its headmasters had been. Until 1945 all headmasters of the school, first granted in 1295 to the Guild of the Holy Cross, had been clergy. In the Victorian era most notable was Rev. Robert de Courcy Laffan (1885-1895). It was he who in 1893 initiated the first procession for Shakespeare's Birthday, which is why the school to this day has precedence at the head of the annual trek to lay flowers on the Bard's grave. His illustrated talk showed pupils, staff and buildings some still used today, but many that no longer exist. During the 80 years from 1860 the school accommodated both day students and boarders. It was still a small school in 1939 with only 158 on the register, an increase upon the 69 of 1914, so it is even more poignant that 32 old boys would make the ultimate sacrifice during WWI and 51 during WWII.

Richard has kindly donated to the History group copies of two of his books 'King Edward VI School' and 'The Boys of Shakespeare's School in the second world war.' We have two sets of each. Please contact David Dumper if you wish to borrow a volume to read.

Our next talk on Oct 10 will be 'Plot Lines' exploring Shakespeare connections to an assassination attempt on Queen Elizabeth in 1581, Essex Rebellion 1601, and Gunpowder Plot 1605.

KEEP FIT GROUP



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



We were all pleased to be back after our summer break and everyone is doing some interesting work. We hope to have a display later in the year.

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



Play Reading was cancelled in September because of other commitments. We will meet on Thursday the 20th October at Sylvia's 10.30 for coffee.

READING GROUP – MONDAY

Phyllis Bailey



Monday Reading group.....We welcomed a new member this month and discussed the book 'Elizabeth is missing' by Emma Healey. There wasn't much enthusiasm for it although the author's ability to get into the mind of an Alzheimer's patient was impressive. Several of us thought we wished we had read the book backwards so we could grasp how the story made good sense. We spent most of the time discussing other subjects partially inspired by the book. We hope the next Library selection will inspire us a bit more!

READING GROUP—WEDNESDAY

Dorothy Jones



This month we read GRACE GROWS by Shelle Summers. The New York critic said " Shelle Summers sparkling debut novel is romantic, funny & wise. Our group had a different opinion! Some of our comments were "tedious" , " lightweight read", " couldn't care tuppence about the characters", " two thirds was too much" We would not recommend it to other groups.

READING GROUP - FRIDAY

Coral Bradley



We read "Amy Snow" by Tracy Rees. This is her first book and to some extent it showed. The plot was quite good, set in the 1800s - the main character followed clues in a letter to discover what had happened to her friend and on the way had several adventures. However the other characters in the book were either very good or very bad and some of the encounters were hard to believe in. We thought that in time she might become quite a good writer.

ROCK AND ROLL GROUP

Coral Bradley



We had our usual meeting but we were a bit thin on the ground as some people were still on holiday. Our programme was varied and covered a good range of rock & roll with some interesting discussions.

SCIENCE, NATURE & 'ALL THINGS' TECHNICAL GROUP

Edwin Lilly

Report of the September meeting: "The Rise and Fall of the Chariot" given by Susan Slater of Rugby U3A. Susan gave a very interesting and informative illustrated taken about the Chariot, particularly its use in war, how and why its use declined and the development of wheels and body happened.



It developed in Asia around the Caspian Sea several centuries before the Egyptian civilisation began and spread quite rapidly during the ensuing centuries. It was introduced to Egypt by the Hyksos people when they conquered northern Egypt. Its use declined when the tribes from Mongolia and China began a westward migration. They preferred to use horses by riding them. So cavalry rendered the chariot redundant as a fighting vehicle. The Romans later used it sometimes for personal military transport and raced them in their stadia.

The next meeting on Friday 14th October will be a talk about Shackleton given by Dave Smith.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS

Dorothy Jones

SYMPHONY HALL VISIT WEDNESDAY 30th NOVEMBER

PROGRAMME Dvorak Three Slavonic Dances; Brahms Piano Concerto No 1; Sibelius Symphony No 5
The cost of the visit is £36. This includes the concert ticket and return coach to the Symphony Hall.

PAYMENT IS NOW DUE. Please send a cheque £36, made out to Heart of England U3A, to Dorothy Jones.

We leave the Leisure Centre promptly at 12-15pm and pick up our Henley group en-route to Birmingham.

THEATRE GROUP.

Coral Bradley



On 29th September our group goes to Malvern to see "Relatively Speaking". Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. I will not be there but Aline has kindly stepped in to take care of everything and to hand out the tickets. I hope that everyone enjoys the play.

By popular demand I have booked for "Sister Act" at Malvern on 10 December 2016; the cost of this is £36.50 and will take names at the October meeting.

WALKING GROUP

Valery Redfern



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 12th October 2016 at 10.00 a.m. and start from Moreton in Marsh; we can park by the Town Hall in the market square. This is a five mile walk with some excellent views over Batsford Arboretum and the leaves should be turning and very colourful

I recommend good walking shoes or boots and bring a drink along with you. Look forward to seeing you.

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

Stratford	- 26th October	- Marie MacDonald	- "Warwickshire and the Gunpowder Plot"
Shottery	- 1st November	- Roy Smart	- "The Last Naval Hero—(a local man)"
Dene Valley	- 11th October	- Bill Davis	- "The Mary Rose Story"
Alcester	- 1st November	- Howard Drury	- "Why Trees"

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOTICE-

Annual Membership Subscriptions for Heart of England U3A are due on 1 September 2016. There was a discount for early payment but that has now passed. The subscription is £16 per person.

Your annual subscription can be paid in one of three ways.

- Subscriptions can continue to be paid by cash or cheque in the normal way at the meetings or by post to the Treasurer, Sue Tringham, 2 Guild Cottages, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 6HD. **Cheques payable to Heart of England U3A**
- Online banking. Bank details are Lloyds Bank, Stratford upon Avon. Sort Code 30 98 26 Account No. 00617394 but **please remember to include your name as reference.**
- Subscriptions can also be paid over the counter in person at any Lloyds Bank quoting the Sort Code 30 98 26 Account No.00617394 and **your name as reference.**

U3A DIARIES

The U3A 2017 Diaries will be on sale at the October meeting. These 2017 Diaries are a very visible red and still at the bargain price of £2! They can be found on the Treasurer's table at the back of the Methodist Hall.

HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
October 2016	Walking Group	January 2017	SNATTs Group
November 2016	Card Making Group	February 2017	History Group
December 2016	Dinah's Luncheon Group	March 2017	The Choir

GROUP	GROUP LEADER	USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)
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