



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Web Address:-

[www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk](http://www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk)

# Heart of England

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## April 2017 Newsletter

### **TODAY'S MEETING**

Our speaker for April will be Brian Draper, back by popular demand & his subject this time is "Warwickshire Avon. A look at this Midland River from the Battlefield at Naseby to the Battlefield at Tewkesbury"

### **NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER**

Our May talk is 'Dreaming Since Seven' - Presentation by Multi-genre Author Shirley Thompson, with 11 book titles to her credit, Shirley describes her writing experiences since the age of seven, including readings from 6 of her books.

### **NOTES FROM THE CHAIR**

*Dorothy Jones*

Hello everyone. "O to be in England, Now that April's there", from Home thoughts from Abroad, by Robert Browning. We are very lucky to be living in Leafy Warwickshire. I do hope you are enjoying the spring sunshine and managing to get out in the garden and possibly have a walk by the river.

### **OUTINGS—SKITTLE EVENING**

*Coral Bradley*

The list for the skittles evening is almost full, only four places remaining. The date for this is 30 June 2017 and the cost is £13.00 which covers the use of the skittle alley and a buffet meal.

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

Stratford	- 26 <sup>th</sup> April	- "A life of Gustav Holst"	- Angela Applegate.
Shottery	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	- "Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies"	- Martin Lloyd.
Dene Valley	- 11 <sup>th</sup> April	- "Victorian Gardens in Warwick".	- Richard Hayward .
Alcester	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	- "London's Liquid History".	- William Wells.

The next two Group reports are on the front page due to space limitations later in the Newsletter.

### **SCRAPBOOK GROUP**

*Edwin Lilly for Heather Bridgewater*

Our second meeting was on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March at the Methodist Church Centre. We had a good turnout and all managed some useful work learning new skills and making a start on our new scrapbooks. We next meet on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 2.00pm at the Methodist Church Centre.

### **AMDRAM GROUP**

*Edwin Lilly for Geoff Bridgewater*

Geoff Bridgewater organised the last meeting on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March. We met at Norma and Linda's flats for a drink before moving on to the Red Lion next door for our supper. Afterwards we made our way to the Bear Pit Theatre. We were booked for a production of Oscar Wilde's comedy "Present Laughter". We were thoroughly entertained by a very funny comedy excellently presented by the theatre company. Well done.

Our next outing will probably be on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September. Details later.

## 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](http://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](http://www.u3aonline.org.au)

A course from U3A Online is underway - "Property to Partner". See Jayne Jones or

Sue Workman for details. More courses are in the pipeline. These courses are ideal for small study groups and are free to members. Details to follow.

NB The original 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.

*For more details about courses, please contact Robyn ([redbird22@hotmail.co.uk](mailto: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*

Several of the group attended a matinee performance of "Snow in Midsummer" at the Swan Theatre on 15<sup>th</sup> March. The production is based on the classical Chinese drama by Guan Hanqing and will provide the group with an ideal discussion topic for our get-together in April. The Group would like to invite anyone who has seen this play to join us for the discussion and afternoon tea on **Friday afternoon, 7<sup>th</sup> April, 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](mailto:redbird22@hotmail.co.uk) or David Ralph. [david.ralph1@icloud.com](mailto:david.ralph1@icloud.com)

## ALL SWING & JAZZ GROUP

*Mavis Pickett*

### Report of the February 2017 Meeting



The day Doris blew into town was the day my programme was presented to Our Group. Oh dear, were the musical Gods sending me a message?...HOWEVER, all went well. The programme I put together was entitled 'Putting a Face to the name', I endeavoured to supply a picture of each artist as the track was being played. The programme began with the Kai Winding Septet playing "The Preacher" followed by Stan Getz with "Swiss Miss" and then "Volare" played by Bucky Pizzarelli and Lionel Hampton, the next five tracks ranged over British Trad, Modern Jazz, vocals and The first half was closed with Ted Heath playing "Hot Toddy". After our coffee break (unfortunately no hot toddy available) we were off again with Johnny Hodges playing "Hodge Podge". What continually amazes me with jazz is the Range of instruments used in the solo spots, today they covered Trombone, Saxophone, Vibraphone, Guitar, Piano, Harmonica, Trumpet. Cornet and that was without the vocals. One of the difficulties I found when compiling this programme was there are such a lot of "gems" out there and to shrink my choice to twenty tracks was not easy. The afternoon finished with a rousing version of "Sentimental Journey" played by 'Band with a Beat' which for sheer bravura knocked Doris into a corner. Thanks to Geoff for presenting my programme for me. Don't forget we meet of the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month in the lounge of the Methodist Church Hall starting at 2pm.

## ART APPRECIATION

*Sylvia Kentish / Pam Collins*



In March, kindly hosted by Judith Fogg, we enjoyed a DVD on the Swiss-born artist, Paul Klee, *Silence of the Angel*. Klee was a poet, musician and draughtsman, as well as an artist. He felt that painting, like music, required equilibrium and harmony. He was also obsessed with applying colour and graphics in innovative ways, drawing inspiration from diverse sources such as north African architecture, Roman mosaics, the laws of physics and the minute details he observed in nature. This film was of particular interest because it took us beyond more conventional art, into the area of modern art, and the way in which modern art moved beyond cubism.

In April we will be visiting St Mary's church in Warwick. Our visit will be focused on the church's stained glass. This is a follow-up to the very interesting talk we had in February, when Phyl Collins took us through the history of stained glass portrayals and the techniques used to produce them.

## 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

*Carolyn Leach*



The sale of our cards up till this February is £3,622 60p. We raised £569 80p last year which supported 11 local charities A big "thank-you" to all our customers, keep up the good work please. Our goal is £4000 before the end of this year. We would welcome any request for a local cause that we have not yet supported.

## CHINWAGS

*Aline Cumming*



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

## THE CHOIR

*Dorothy Jones*



Our concert is on Friday June 2nd at 2-30pm in the Methodist Church Hall. Our theme is " U3A Sings USA". Tickets will be on Sale at the main meeting. £5 including light refreshments. If you are unable to come on to our main concert we are repeating the same programme at Briarcroft at 2-30pm on Friday 9th June. You will be most welcome.

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

*Aline Cumming*



We met in March for a programme arranged by Jean consisting of ballet music. From Gayanah by Khatcurian we heard the Sabre Dance and three other tracks. From Masquerade we had the Waltz and from Spartacus the Adagio (used for the Onedin Line) and the Dance of the Greek Slave. We paused for tea then moved to Borodin's opera Scheherazade to hear the Polovtsian Dances. From Prokofiev's ballet Romeo and Juliet we had tracks including the Capulets, the Arrival of the Guests, Juliet's theme and the Dance of the Knights. Finally we were brought back to earth by Strauss's Blue Danube Waltz. A stirring programme. We meet again on April 17, Easter Monday.

## COMPUTER GROUP

*Robyn Nicoll*



The course of 5 sessions at the Parish Centre concludes on 12<sup>th</sup> April. We have covered topics for **tablets and laptops**. One of the most popular has been "Photo Housekeeping".

We are taking a short break over Easter and then have 4 more sessions booked as follows:

**May 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. June 28<sup>th</sup>. July 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**Fee for these sessions - £5**

*If interested in joining us, please sign the sheet on the notice board table or contact Robyn.*

Several members come to help the "students" and if you are able to offer some time to help during these afternoons it would be much appreciated. Please let Robyn know. ([redbird22@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:redbird22@hotmail.co.uk))

### **CREATIVE CRAFTS GROUP**

*Tricia Callaghan*



Our March meeting was held in the restaurant at Premier Inn on Birmingham Road where we were very well looked after and enjoyed views of the canal with ducks and swans looking in at us.

We made Easter wreaths using a rattan "twiggy effect" base which we then decorated with flowers, ribbons, eggs etc. One even had chocolate eggs!

Our temporary home proved to be very successful and we had an enjoyable and productive afternoon. Next month we will be making parchment using wax paper with fresh flowers and leaves.

### **DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP**

*Geoff Bridgewater*



We met at Paul's house in West Street where we reviewed the photographs for the subject "Portraiture". There were many photographs of members' family members and some good results. Some useful comments were made about the poses and composition.

The subject for next month is "Water in all its forms". Results will be reviewed on Monday 8th May at Penny's home, 53 West Street, meeting at 10.25am.

### **DINAHS**

*Sylvia Crooks*



7th March was our last lunch together at the Red Lion. Lots of chat over, and during a lovely meal. Charity shops, more and more people seem to be using them: searching through looking for a bargain. Looking for Antique Jewellery is another popular thing to look for in the Antique Centres; you might find something special !! Television viewing : 'Broadchurch' and 'Replacement' were discussed. Also

the Picture House, what will happen to it when Bell Court is finished and opened. Denia on the Costa Blanca sounds interesting and worth a visit.

We next meet Tuesday the 4th April at 12.15pm. Red Lion again.

### **DISCUSSION GROUP**

*Athena Roderick*



David suggested the topic, which was Affordable Housing. We felt that planning departments were more keen on granting planning permission for large houses which pleased developers and brought in funds for councils, but did nothing to help young people and lower paid workers who are essential for oiling the wheels of communities. We know that there have been laws 'making' developers supply a percentage of smaller houses and social housing, but we also know that these laws are ignored by builders shutting down sites when the target percentage is in sight and another site is opened up. We felt that Fordham House with 82 apartments for essential workers was a step in the right direction. Apparently, small mews houses can command £920 a month. When council houses were sold off years ago, they should have been replaced by more council houses, then we might not have the housing shortage that we have now. It was thought that builders are 'hoarding' brown field sites waiting for land prices to go even higher. A need for councils to take a stronger line?

### **FILM GROUP**

*Mary Fishleigh*



In March we watched the film "Plenty". This film was released in 1985 and had a wonderful cast including Meryl Streep, John Gielgud, Charles Dance, Tracey Ullman, Sting, Ian McKellen and Sam Neill. The observant amongst us also noticed that Hugh Lawry was in the cast list. After the rather violent film last month, this was a pleasant relief and was enjoyed by the group.

We still have room for some extra members, so if you fancy watching some films that are not on general release, cult films, foreign films (with subtitles) or classic films from different genres why not come along on the second Tuesday of the month at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall Lounge. You will be very welcome.

## GAMES GROUP—SCRABBLE, DOMINOES AND CARDS

*Sue Tringham*



For the time being we will continue to meet at 2 Guild Cottages, Church Street, at 2.00pm. This month we meet on 2nd and 4th Mondays to miss Easter. 10th and 24th April. All welcome!

## GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP

*Suzzy Genge*



The March meeting of this group was at Packwood House. We enjoyed a refreshing drink in the café and then walked around the park and gardens, to see the spring flowers. The daffodils were specially lovely. One or two of us stayed on to visit the house as well.

On April 11th we shall be walking near Coughton Court to catch sight of some bluebells, hopefully.

## GRUMPY OLD MEN

*Graham Michell*



It was with sadness that at this month's meeting we had to mark the recent passing of three Grumpy Old Men Group stalwarts, Jack Isaacson, David Knight and Ron Mendham. R.I.P. three much valued, but far from grumpy, Grumps.

The discussion topic was "My Bucket List" – defined as "Targets on your journey through life". Well, not surprisingly, in view of our positions on that journey the buckets were now not over full and the lists somewhat truncated. Although realism dictated that it was necessary to curb still remaining burning ambitions and adventurous spirit some still yearned to visit far flung places such as the Grand Canyon and Buenos Aires. Others now had more modest targets such as exploring more of this country which, to some extent, had been ignored in favour of visits to supposedly exotic destinations. We reflected on what our bucket lists would have looked like at the start of the journey, although it would have been called aims, aspirations, ambitions and hopes and dreams, and agreed that circumstances and opportunities applying at the time had influenced and sometimes changed the direction but in general the journey had been good, at times bumpy, but predominately fulfilling.

**Next meeting - Wed. 19<sup>th</sup> April - Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre**

**Subject - The Advantages, benefits and disadvantages of retirement. Intro. – ALL.**

## HISTORY GROUP

*Jean Hicks*



Our March lecture on the Tolpuddle Martyrs was given by our ex Chairperson, Janet Anslow. She gave us a very interesting insight into the social history of the 19th Century. Workers were on a wage that never exceeded 9 shillings a week and their existence offered nothing but despair. This led to the founding of the Tolpuddle Union in 1833.

On 24th February 1834 the 6 Tolpuddle activists led by George Loveless, a methodist preacher, were arrested under the 1797 Mutiny Act and 3 weeks later on 17th March the 6 appeared in a Dorchester Court to find the full vengeance of government and law awaiting them. After a 2 day trial they were sentenced to 7 years transportation to Australia. 6 women and 15 children were left to poverty.

Soon protests for fair play were pouring into Parliament and Lord Melbourne as Prime Minister had to act. On March 14th 1836 Lord Russell granted a free pardon to all 6 men. When they returned home farms had been bought for them by a public fund. 4 later emigrated to Canada

Next meeting: April 10th at 2pm

Speaker: David Dumper

Topic: Centenary of Lions International

## 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*



We meet on alternate Monday mornings and after a chat we settle down to our drawing & painting. We are a self help group and encourage one another with our Masterpieces!

### 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 Thursday 16th March, 10.30. We finished the Tom Stoppard play "Arcadia". A long intellectual read with confusion and humour; it would be well worth seeing. Next get together is Thursday 20th April at 10.30 for coffee at Sylvia's.

### READING GROUP—MONDAY

*Phyllis Bailey*



This month we read "Shop Girl" by Mary Portas. Shop Girl is about Mary Newman Portas's memoirs up to the age of 21years. Written as an epitaph to her Mother. Born into an Irish Family, Mary had 4 siblings. The kitchen was the hub of the family with Mother's home cooking, stories and cups of tea, welcoming neighbours and friends. Shop Girl is an easy read: not everyone read it. Not being everyone's cup of tea!!

There are vacancies in our group, if anyone would like to join us, we meet the 3rd Monday in the month. If you are interested please ring Phyllis Bailey, or Sylvia Crooks, 01789 416965.

### READING GROUP—WEDNESDAY

*Dorothy Jones*



We decided to cancel our March meeting as many of our group were away. We are still choosing our own books and our next meeting will be at Ruth's house on Wednesday 24th May at 2-30pm.

### READING GROUP—FRIDAY

*Coral Bradley*



Hurrah! a book that everyone liked. This was 'The Improbability of Love' by Hannah Rothschild and is about a small French painting. The writer really knows her subject - art- and she describes the art world in detail. Some characters were really OTT and the chance of one being able to produce a themed meal without any training did stretch our credulity but the book is well written.

### ROCK AND ROLL GROUP

*Coral Bradley*



Tony Whitely gave us a really good programme ending with some excerpts from a concert held thirty years ago which certainly gave us 'food for thought'. Thank you Tony.

### SCIENCE, NATURE & 'ALL THINGS' TECHNICAL GROUP

*Edwin Lilly*



At our meeting on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March, Ian Roberts gave us his take on cheese. Cheese can be made from most types of milk including cows' milk, buffalo milk, ewes' milk, goat's milk. Even some most unusual milks - Soya and almond can be made into cheese. However, most commercially available cheeses are



made from cows, ewes or goats milk. Italian Mozzarella (and not all of that) seems to be the only one made from buffalo milk.

Ian gave some facts about how cheese is made and the influences on taste and after uses of cheese, with some samples distributed by Elaine to enhance the experience. We tend to eat cheese with crackers but that is not so around the world. The French, for instance, will often have a cheese course during dinner with the cheese eaten with a knife and fork.

Altogether an interesting take on the cheeses we eat and how we should try the boundaries and try different cheeses, different presentations, and different uses in, for instance, cooking.

The next meetings:

- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May - the trip to the BBC Studios in Birmingham .  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June - a visit to the Acme Whistle Factory.

### **SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB**

*Brian Bradley*



There will not be a Sunday lunch in April.

The next lunch will be on Sunday 7th. May 2017. Venue to be announced in next months NewsLetter.

### **SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS**

*Dorothy Jones*



I now have two tickets due to a cancellation. We leave the Stratford Leisure Centre promptly at 12-15pm. The cost of this visit is £36. Contact Dorothy Jones on 01789 204892 if you would like to join us.

### **THEATRE GROUP.**

*Coral Bradley*



The play in Malvern on 29 April 2017 is fully booked but I am still waiting for some money to come in.

The next play is also at Malvern on 22 July 2017 and is called 'The Play That Goes Wrong' about a group of actors who act as if they are amateurs and have many problems.

The cost of this is £26.50 and we will leave Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30 as usual.

### **PIANO GROUP**

*Sylvia Crooks*

The Piano Group met Wednesday 22nd March. We talked about the music we are playing, also individually played a rendition of the practice piece. We all say this newly formed group has encouraged us to play more often. One of our group has just been on holiday in New Zealand where her cousin has a piano, so she tried to play a piece without music. Her cousin realised she had the piece that was being played. Now the cousin is playing her piano again after a long lapse. So our group is making an impression as far as New Zealand!!

### **WALKING GROUP**

*Valerie Redfern*



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April at 10.00 a.m. and start from Sibford Gower (a village between Shipston-on-Stour and Banbury); we can park in the Wykham Arms (OX15 5RX); the pub is approximately 5-6 miles from Shipston on Stour. This is a 5 mile walk through some lovely countryside and we hope for some really good weather so we can appreciate the views. The leaders of the walk will be Malcolm and Elaine Burden

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

### **HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS**

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
April 2017	Garden Appreciation Group	July 2017	All That Swing & Jazz Group
May 2017	Painting & Drawing Group	August 2017	Am Dram Group
June 2017	Film Group	September 2017	Art Appreciation Group

<b><u>GROUP</u></b>	<b><u>GROUP LEADER</u></b>	<b><u>TELEPHONE</u></b>	<b><u>USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)</u></b>
All That Swing & Jazz	Brian Bradley	01789—488 551	4th Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
AmDram & Supper	Geoff Bridgewater	01789—298 059	As Announced
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins	01789—263 794 01789—774 712	3rd Friday 2.00pm
Bridge	John Yeomans	01789—748 197	Every Tuesday 2.00pm
Card Making	Carolyn Leach	01789—266 194	As Announced
China Discussion Group	Robyn Nicoll	01789—417 935	See Newsletter
Chinwags Lunch	Aline Cumming	01789—298 357	4th Monday 12.00 noon
Choir	Ruth Grahame Dorothy Jones	01789—267 984 01789—204 892	Every Friday 10.30—12.00 noon
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	01789—298 357	3rd Monday 2.00pm
Creative Crafts	Tricia Callaghan	01789—298 870	3rd Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
Computers	Robyn Nicoll	01789—417 935	2nd & 4th Wednesday 2.30—4.00pm
Digital Photography	Geoff Bridgewater	01789—298 059	As Announced
Dinah's Luncheon	Sylvia Crooks	01789—416 965	1st Tuesday for lunch
Discussion	Athena Roderick	01789—551 416	2nd Wednesday
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett	01789—488 484 01789—298 235	2nd Tuesday 2.00pm
Games –Scrabble, Dominoes and Cards	Sue Tringham	01789—204 295	1st & 3rd Monday 2.00—4.00pm
Garden Appreciation Group	Suzy Genge	01789—261 447	2nd Tuesday
Grumpy Old Men	Graham Mitchell	01789—205 195	3rd Wednesday for lunch
History	David Dumper	01789—550 193	2nd Monday 2.00pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	01789—204 707	Every Thursday 10.00am
Painting/Drawing	Dorothy Jones Sue Butler	01789—204 892 01789—550 771	As Announced
Piano Group	Sylvia Crooks	01789—416 965	4th Wednesday 10.00—11.00am
Pilates - Monday	Gill Ganner	01789—269 657	Every Monday 12.15—1.15pm
Pilates - Wednesday	Sue Workman	01789—297 061	Every Wednesday 10.15—11.15am
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	01789—416 965	See Newsletter for dates
Poetry Reading	Jennifer Davey	01789—720 478	2nd Wednesday 10.00—12.00noon
Reading - Monday	Phyllis Bailey	01789—509 659	3rd Monday 2.30—4.30pm
Reading - Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	01789—204 892	3rd Wednesday 2.30pm
Reading - Friday	Coral Bradley	01789—488 551	As Appropriate
Rock & Roll Music	Coral Bradley	01789—488 551	2nd Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
Science, Nature & All Things Technical	Geoff Bridgewater	01789—298 059	2nd Friday 2.00—4.00pm
Sunday Lunch	Brian Bradley	01789—488 551	As Appropriate
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones	01789—204 892	As Appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	01789—488 551	As Appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	01789—471 048	2nd Wednesday 10.00am