



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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## *February 2017 Newsletter*

### **TODAY'S MEETING**

Our speaker for February is Anne Prosser from Dogs for Good giving a "Volunteer's Perspective".

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

Our speaker for March is Jo Hands from Wildlife Trusts and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust who will talk about "who we are and what we do. Information on some of our reserves; what can be found there and how it is managed. Details on our current campaigns".

### **NOTES FROM THE CHAIR**

*Dorothy Jones*

We all enjoyed our New Year Lunch at Pierre Bistro Saturday 21st January.  
Delicious food, good company and lots of chatter!  
Many thanks to Athena for organising. We look forward to the next one!

We will have another informal new members meeting on Thursday March 30th at 2pm at the Methodist Church Centre, Old Town. If you have joined Hof E U3A during the last 12 months, come and join committee members and group leaders for tea & biscuits and find out more about our activities.  
We look forward to meeting you.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

We announce the sudden death of committee member David Knight during Friday night, 20th January. We extend our sympathies to his wife, Brenda, and family.

### **SCAM ALERTS FROM WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Please be aware of scams of all types—in emails, by telephone or by other means. Warwickshire County Council have an alert service on their website at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/scams](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/scams). You can view information about the latest scams or sign up for an alerting service. See the example alert on the accompanying single page document enclosed with this newsletter. If in doubt ask for advice from members of the committee.

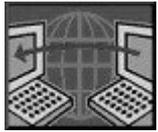
### **EMAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER & MAGAZINE ENTIRES.**

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: [edwindsandy@gmx.com](mailto:edwindsandy@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](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 with a small annual fee required. 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.

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.

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*

At the January get-together, we were entertained by Su who had chosen the Potala Palace in Tibet as her World Heritage Site. Su had visited there in 2000 and, as well as a video presentation, had taken many photos at the site illustrating the lavishly decorated halls, chapels and shrines. The huge complex was the chief residence of the Dalai Lama until 1959 and was designated a WH Site in 1994.

There followed a slide show of the red rocks and rainbow ridges of Zhangye Dansia described by Lisal.

Patricia had prepared all the paints, brushes and papers for us to practise our brush stroke writing and painting which kept us busy for the remainder of the afternoon.

We meet again on Friday afternoon, 3rd March in Side Room 1 at 2.30 – 4.30. Our main topic will be "Lady Fu Hao" presented by David.

Our get-togethers are informal and varied consisting of a short language/practical session led by Patricia Wy, 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 December 2016 Meeting



Our December meeting was a departure from our usual format in that we joined forces with the Classical Music and Rock and Roll Groups to celebrate our enjoyment of music in all forms. The programme was presented in three blocks. We started with the Jazz Group introduced by John Cooper with Paul Robeson singing "Old Man River". This group finished with the Ted Heath band playing "East of the Sun", then it was on to the Rock and Roll group lead by Coral Bradley which opened with "Tutti Frutti" played, sang, performed by Little Richard. This group finished with "Nut Rocker" by B Bumble and the Stingers(?). The third group lead by Aline Cumming took us to Christmas with Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols, Procession arranged by David Wilcocks. And finished with "Unto us a Child is Born" from Handel's Messiah. After the interval (more than usual variety of cakes, biscuits and mince pies). It was back to Rock and Roll with a Rolling Stones Classic "We can't get no Satisfaction". Coral's mini gig finished with another Classic "Barcelona" sung by Freddie Mercury and Montserrat Caballe... Then it was Aline's turn starting with the Corelli "Allegro - Concerto Grosso" and finishing with two Hely Hutchinson tracks of his "Carol Symphony" (a delight).

Finally John took us through to the end of our programme with Humphrey Lyttelton playing "Fish Seller" and lastly Bunk Johnson with Tishomingo Blues.

Thanks are extended to the three presenters and also to Brian for all the arrangements and recordings that were required. Back to usual next month. Don't forget we meet on the **4th** Thursday of the month in the Lounge of the Methodist Church Hall starting at 2pm.

## ART APPRECIATION

*Sylvia Kentish / Pam Collins*



At our January meeting we enjoyed an interesting DVD: *The Lost Supper*. Through the voices of many of the people who were closely associated with the restoration of The Last Supper, this film followed the story of this masterpiece, and, in particular, its restoration in the last twenty years of the 20th century.

We learnt that this fresco was always fragile, because the initial wall treatment had been inadequate to hold the paint. After several 'touch ups' over the years, the decision was taken to strip it back to whatever remained of Leonardo da Vinci's original work and completely restore it from there. All the decisions, the steps along the way, and even the final result of that process, were all highly contentious. The debate continues as to whether the restored Last Supper is a glorious achievement or a tragic mistake that now portrays very little of da Vinci's original intentions. In February Phyl Collins will give us a presentation on stained glass.

## 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*



Last month the sale of our cards made £50 for Stour Valley Visually Impaired. The next Charity will be The Mayors Fund. Thank-you to all those who support us so generously. Our next work-shop will be on Feb 24th.

## 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 were all very happy to return to our weekly choir sessions on Friday 13th January. Unluckily for some but super for us. We are now practising songs we started to learn before Christmas and have welcomed several new members. Everyone seems to be in fine voice! We have sent a cheque for £350 to Stratford Cancer & Eye Hospital Appeal from the proceeds of our Christmas Concert.

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

*Aline Cumming*



In December we joined Jazz and Rock and Roll for a combined meeting at the Methodist Hall which all enjoyed although Classical Music members were thin on the ground. There was agreement to do it again next year.

We resumed in January for a programme consisting mainly of requests. It included Elgar's "Chanson de Matin", Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave", a selection from Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" and, after tea, two movements from Beethoven's Choral Symphony.

The February meeting is cancelled as I will be away but we meet again at Bridge Cottage on Monday 20th March at 2pm.

## COMPUTER GROUP

*Robyn Nicoll*



The course of 5 sessions begins on Wednesday 8th February from 2.30 to 4.00 at the Parish Centre.

We will cover topics for tablets and laptops with experienced members coming to offer their help.

Here are all the dates:

**February 8th and 22nd; March 8th and 22nd; April 12th.**

The total cost is £7.00 payable in advance. (Cheques payable to "Heart of England U3A")

A couple of spaces are available so if interested contact Robyn.

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

### DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

*Geoff Bridgewater*



Our group met in January in the Methodist Hall Lounge to view and discuss our efforts photographing 'Stratford's Christmas Lights'. The results were very encouraging and showed a wide variety of creative interpretations on the theme. Our members are using digital cameras, tablets and mobile phones and are really appreciating the basic rules of composition and lighting. The task for February is 'Portraiture and People' and we will review the efforts at our March meeting. I suggested some possible portrait posing examples and my 'coy' expressions seemed to cause some hilarity - OK, I'm not George Clooney! Thanks to Jayne for the refreshments.

### DINAHS

*Sylvia Crooks*



Here we are again at the start of a New Year. A lovely welcome from the staff at the Red Lion. (I think they missed our company in December as we had lunch at the Vintner.) After catching up with how our Christmas went. We chatted about H.P. Printers; presents given at Christmas; preference for Glasgow rather than Edinburgh. Sherlock was on the front line because we could not understand what it was about!! Hull being the City of Culture is, we think; well worth a visit.

If you have a cough you cannot get rid of, a recommended proven remedy : a cough medicine or pastilles from Boots called "Bronco Stop" a herbal medicine.

We meet again Tuesday 7th February at the Red Lion 12.15pm.

### DISCUSSION GROUP

*Athena Roderick*



The topic was "Will the next generations live to over 100 years &, what might the implications be?" We all agreed that this will put an enormous strain on NHS & Social Care Services & will mean that people will have to retire later & many will have to retrain, quite late in life to pay for these services. The problem might be, that as technology becomes more available, this will cut down the number of jobs available. It was agreed that most humans are happiest when in work, which provides not only income, but often a social life & a feeling of achievement. If many people are jobless, it will be bad for our society. We were also concerned about Care Home provision for the end of life, as some experience shows that it is very often a lonely time for the very elderly if living alone & a lack of human contact can have devastating results. It will need to be improved. If the obesity epidemic isn't controlled, this may also mean that a great number of people won't reach old age. Maybe the same with pollution & concern was expressed for the amount of time that people spend on mobile phones, which may be impacting on long term health. We then talked about coordinating services, so that 'newly alone' people could be encouraged to go out & socialise, which is so important. Health Visitors used to help people to look after themselves & we were told of a new service being started in SOA, which aims to reach more people who may be lonely. We hope to hear more about this.

We will meet again on Wed 8th Feb, usual time, usual place.

### FILM GROUP

*Mary Fishleigh*



Due to a technical hitch we were not able to show our scheduled film. Geoff Bridgewater stepped into the breach and not only loaned his laptop but also a film for us to watch.

The film we watched was "Woman in Gold" starring Helen Mirren. The film is based on the true story of Maria Altmann, an elderly Jewish refugee living in Los Angeles, who fought the government of Austria for almost a decade to reclaim Gustav Klimt's iconic painting of her aunt which was stolen from her relatives by the Nazis just prior to World War II. We all enjoyed the film very much and it was especially pertinent after Geoff's talk at the main meeting about his ancestors. Many thanks, Geoff.

Our aim for the group is to show films that are not on general release now – some oldies, some considered art or cult, some foreign films (with subtitles), some that are regarded as exceptional for the acting or production. We have space for some more members, so if you are interested in joining this group, please contact Mary or Mavis.

Our next meeting will be on February 14th at 2pm in the Lounge at the Methodist Church.

## GAMES GROUP—SCRABBLE, DOMINOES AND CARDS

*Sue Tringham*



The February 2017 meetings of the Games Group will be on Monday 6th and Monday 20<sup>th</sup>. For the time being we will continue to meet at 2 Guild Cottages, Church Street, from 2 – 4pm. All welcome!

## GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP

*Suzy Genge*



In January, many of us met at Bella Italia ( after a slight diversion! ) for a coffee and a vote on the events for 2017. We agreed on a variety of visits to gardens throughout the year. The next trip is to Elm Close, Welford, 10:30 am Tuesday 14th February, to see the snowdrops.

## GRUMPY OLD MEN

*Graham Michell*



For a Grumpy Old Man true happiness is having something to get really grumpy about and, from the evidence of contributions to January's discussion topic "My grumpiest moment of 2016", last year proved to be a particularly happy one for many of the Group. The greatest grumbles seem to be associated with changes to "services" supposedly, but often erroneously, for the benefit of us the customer e.g. banks, supermarkets and computer "updates"; applications for anything and everything "on line" (often much more complicated and time consuming than filling in the old fashioned paper form); waste of money by and difficulty in dealing with local authorities; misuse of "foreign aid"; disposal of "hazardous" waste; pedestrian crossing lights etc., etc. Topping all, however, and earning him the Grump of the Month Trophy, was David Renfrew's sorry tale of the missing mashed potato.

**Next meeting** - **Wed. Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>**. Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre

**Subject** - **My Bucket List.** **Introduction** - **ALL.**

## HISTORY GROUP

*Jean Hicks*



Our January lecture, given by David Ball, was on the Black Country. David gave us a brief history of the area and its inhabitants. It was interesting to hear how it got its name. It is thought that a 13 year old Queen Victoria was once so offended by the sight of the area that she closed the curtains of her carriage as she passed through and wrote in her diary "the county is very desolate, the men, women and children and houses are all black"

He explained the importance of steam power and the Industrial Revolution. The Black Country was the first place to successfully harness the power of steam and changed the world in doing so.

The many interesting slides from the Black Country Museum stimulated much audience participation making for a very enjoyable afternoon

Next meeting: February 13th.....Stereoscopic photography by Graham Wood. Start 2:00 pm

## 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 do hope you enjoyed seeing our exhibits at the last main meeting. We are now hoping to have a Summer Exhibition! At the moment we have a full group of twelve members and look forward to our fortnightly meetings.

### PILATES GROUP - MONDAY



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

### PILATES GROUP - WEDNESDAY



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

### PLAY READING GROUP

*Sylvia Crooks*



We met on Thursday 19th January at 2.00pm for tea and biccies; then we read Act 1 of "Arcadia" by Tom Stoppard. Look forward to reading Act 11 on Thursday 16th February, 10.30am for Coffee at Sylvia's.

### READING GROUP—MONDAY

*Phyllis Bailey*



This month we enjoyed "Trains and Lovers" by McCall Smith and were amazed that such a prodigious author never fails to please and provoke a lively discussion using his life experiences so brilliantly. Our prize for 2016 however would go to the previous month's selection.."the miniaturist"..which is somehow unforgettable!

### READING GROUP—WEDNESDAY

*Dorothy Jones*



We only had a small group of four at our last meeting and only two of those had read the book "What we were Promised " by Tobias Hill.

Comments ..... "We were not concerned about the characters" " There was a Hiatus in the Middle" " Wouldn't recommend the novel to other groups". As Stratford library is closing for a few months we have decided to re-read some of our favourite classics or treat ourselves to a few "Best Sellers".

### READING GROUP—FRIDAY

*Coral Bradley*



We read "The Bookman's Tale" by Clarke Lovett. We were very hopeful when we started the book because the author can really write and it was interesting as he described his early life and how he became interested in old books and manuscripts. Then he amazingly found a very old manuscript and had the most incredible adventures as he tried to save and keep it. The last third of the book was ridiculous and spoilt what he had set out to do. What is it about modern authors who give themselves an impossible task when they set up a problem that they can't solve?

### ROCK AND ROLL GROUP

*Coral Bradley*



Although it was a very dull day we had a good turnout for rock & roll. The programme was varied with several 'new' recordings that we hadn't had before. This gave us plenty to talk about.

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

*Edwin Lilly*



At our January meeting, well attended as usual, we were given a presentation about paint - Paint and how it covers a multitude of sins". James Maddock was the speaker and he had worked for many years in the paint industry, mainly for ICI Paints Division, in various positions; he knew a thing or two about the production and use of paints but was not able to help us with the chemistry. He gave an interesting presentation and told us about some of the interesting developments in paints and how modern paints are so different and superior to older paints. Thanks to Ian Roberts for arranging the talk.

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

Friday 10th March 2017 Talk "Say Cheese" by Ian.

Wednesday 5th April 2017 Visit to BBC studios at The Mailbox, Birmingham.

## SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

Brian Bradley



The February lunch will be on 5 February 2017 at the Navigation Inn, 12. for 12.30. Please ring Brian Bradley on 01789 488 551 if you would like to join us.

## SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS

Dorothy Jones



Our next visit will be Wednesday May 24th May. 2-15pm.

The programme:

Mozart Symphony no 31(Paris)  
Dvorak Cello Concerto in B Minor  
Schumann Symphony No 1 (Spring)

The cost of this visit is £36. This includes the cost of the ticket and return coach to the Symphony Hall. We leave the Leisure Centre, Stratford upon Avon, promptly at 12-15pm and pick up our Henley members en route.

Payment is now due. Please make the cheque out to Heart of England U3A and send to Dorothy Jones.

## THEATRE GROUP.

Coral Bradley



Our next theatre trip will be to Malvern on 18 March to see "Nell Gwynn". It was the winner of the best new comedy in the Olivier Awards 2016 and is performed by the English Touring Theatre Group; we have seen them before and they were good. The times will be exactly the same as usual - 12.00 from Henley and 12.30 from the Leisure Centre. At the time of writing Johnsons haven't come back to me with their price but I will have it at the meeting in February.

## WALKING GROUP

Valerie Redfern



Quite a few walkers are away in February so the next walk will be on the 14th March 2017 and led by Sandy Stewart more details nearer the time.

We had a lovely walk today from Wellesbourne around Walton Hall and back in the most beautiful sunshine but it did not allow us to take the best photograph.

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

Stratford - 22nd February - "Folklore and Folk Songs" - Dr. Richard Churley.  
Shottery - 7<sup>th</sup> February – "Nicholas Owen – Hide Builder" - Michael Hodgetts.  
Dene Valley - 14th February - " Design and Making of Ladies and Gents Hats" - Louise Pocock.  
Alcester - 7<sup>th</sup> February – "On the Road in North America " – Chris Forse.

## HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
February 2017	History Group	May 2017	Painting & Drawing Group
March 2017	The Choir	June 2017	Film Group
April 2017	Garden Appreciation Group	July 2017	Digital Photography Group

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>GROUP LEADER</b>	<b>TELEPHONE</b>	<b>USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)</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	Suzu 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
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