

THE LINIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Website address:-

Heart of England

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April 2013 Newsletter

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for April is Frieda Barker. Topic: Shakespeare The Man. "Since very little is known about the actual life and education of the man honoured as the world's greatest poet and playwright, we have to rely on legends and myths to fill the void, It is these aspects - the man behind his written legacy - the facts and not the fiction - that will be explored today."

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for May is Dr Javad Hashemi and his topic will be "Leonardo da Vinci's Inventions". "Very few details are known about Leonardo's childhood. About the age of 14 he became an apprentice to the artist Verrocchio. This is where he learned about art, drawing, painting and more. Leonardo da Vinci was an artist, scientist and inventor during the Italian Renaissance. He is considered by many to be one of the most talented and intelligent people of all time. In this talk we concentrate on thos inventions which became the source of inspiration for developing modern tools, machinery, war machines and transports. We will also demonstrate, with miniature models (based on Leonardo's sketches), how they would work."

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

Welcome to our April meeting which starts the second half of this year.

I am pleased to see an increase in our membership and a number of new interest groups being formed.

I will be standing down as Chairman at the AGM in September. We have an excellent Vice Chairman in Geoff Bridgewater to follow me but we will need a new Vice Chairman. If any of you would like to get more involve with U3A and would be interested in joining the committee with a view to taking on this role please speak to me or Geoff.

Davíd Sladden

New Group – Film Group

The Group will be meeting for the first time at 2pm on Tuesday 9th April in the Methodist Church Hall Lounge and from then on the second Tuesday each month, **BUT** please note that our **MAY** meeting will be on the third Tuesday (21st May) owing to unforeseen circumstances.

Mavis Pickett

COURSES ON-LINE FROM NATIONAL OFFICE



Note: There is no charge for Untutored Course access to U3A members. Members will at first need to register at National Office for verification of membership.

National Web Site. www.u3a.org.uk Go to "Create an Account"

A list of the courses may be found on the notice board and all have been downloaded over the past 2 years so if members prefer to bypass National Office, 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. If interested in seeing all the courses on offer from U3A down-under, go to the National Web site (as above), click "On-line courses", then "UK Course list" which gives a link to "U3A Online Inc." 40+ courses are listed with a summary of each course. There is a fee to pay to get access to these courses.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The China On-Liners

We have begun the new modern history course of 8 units entitled "China in Transition from Mao to Now" which has been downloaded from the Australian U3A. It's not too late to join in and to have a go learning Mandarin. We met at the end of March and the date for our next get-together will be advertised in the next newsletter. For more information contact Robyn - redbird22@hotmail.co.uk. who will arrange for the units to be forwarded to you.

Robyn Nicoll

Art Appreciation Group

Our meeting last month, which was kindly hosted by Judith Fogg, was a 'Show and Tell' on the theme *Things Natural*. This brought together an array of beautiful art and craft items from all over the world. Not only did we learn a lot about this remarkable mix of types of artwork and their artists, we also enjoyed the unique personal story that each one represented. On April 19 we are going to Compton

Verney, where there is an exhibition "Bellini Botticelli, Titian . . . 500 years of Italian Art". We'll meet at 1.00 pm in their car park. For more information contact Sylvia Kentish (01789 263794)

Pam Collins

All Swing and Jazz Group

Report of February 2013 meeting



Our February meeting first half entitled 'All Swing and Jazz Folks' swung into action with a bright and breezy rendition of "Joltin' Joe DeMaggio" played by Les Brown and His Band of Renown. From Swing we went to Dixieland with the Gene Goldkette Orchestra playing "I'm going home to my Sweetheart now", then it was back to swing with Leif Uvemark and his Orchestra playing an unusual arrangement of "Skyliner", We followed on with the Kai Winding Quartet playing "How are Things in

Glocca Morra" Louis Jordan and His Tympany Five with "There Ain't Nobody Here But us Chickens" and then a lovely rendering of "But Not for Me" played by Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt. First half finished with "I'm a Little Teapot" played by the Sy Oliver Orchestra. (I won't name names of those who did the actions to it). The second half invited us to 'Eat, Drink and Enjoy' so we did. The menu was somewhat varied starting with "All that Meat and No Potatoes" played by Fats Waller. We then had "A Cup of Coffee" with the Dave Pell Octet, some "Frim Fram Sauce" with Ella Fitzgerald and a "Swedish Pastry", some "Ice Cream" and "Fish and Sticks" played respectively by the Flip Phillips Orchestra, the Chris Barber Band and Eric Delaney and his band. After indulging with Nina Simone in "Gimme a Pigfoot" we had a sip of "Gin Mill Blues" played by Bob Crosby and his Orchestra before retiring home to the indigestion tablets. Once again it was a good afternoon. Next meeting will be as usual in the lounge of the Methodist Church Hall, Old Town on the 25th April and all are welcome.

Mavis Pickett

Big Band Music and Jazz Group



At our Big Band Music and Jazz Group meeting in February Dave Smith put together an unusual programme from his collection of 78rpm records with lots of information about the musicians. Of course the recordings had that distinctive scratchy sound but this enhanced the music! He opened with a Chris Barber recording of The World is waiting for the Sunrise made at the Royal Festival Hall in 1955 – one of the first records Dave ever bought. Johnny Dankworth's own composition, Apple Cake

followed. We then moved over to New York and heard a 1947 recording of The Entertainer by Mutt Carey's band featuring among others, Pops Foster Bs, Baby Dodds Dms and Edmond Hall on clarinet. The next band, The Orig NORKings, was formed in 1918 and played on River Boats. We heard them playing Golden Leaf Strut but sadly they broke up in 1925 just after making this recording. Stan Kenton (pianist and arranger) born in 1911, formed his first band in 1941 having gained a number of years' experience playing with small bands around the West Coast . Stan and his Orchestra played Fascinating Rhythm. Back to England with Freddy Randall (trumpeter) who played in the Freddie Murfield Band alongside Johnny Dankworth. Another outstanding British musician was Isador Simon Phillips (Sid) and we heard Sid with his 1954 band playing Bugle Call Rag. Gene Krupa's orchestra playing Tuxedo Junction followed. We heard about another American, Pine Top Smith, born in 1904 and christened Clarence! Boogie Woogie, which he composed, became an instant hit but before he could make

further recordings he died from gunshot wounds during a fight in a local dance hall. Ted Heath's 'Do nothing till you hear from me' was recorded at his 89th Palladium concert. Dave finished the first set with the Original Hoosier Hot Shots (4 American madcap musicians) playing Nobody's Sweetheart Now. Saints Jazz Band opened the second set with I've found a new baby, and The Dixieland Jazz Group of NBC's Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street won the prize for the longest name! Humphrey Littleton's Close your Eyes was followed by the Glen Miller Orchestra playing Sunrise Serenade. Harry Parry and His Sextet played The Shivers, Harry James' Boogie Woogie Trio played Woo Woo followed by Duke Ellington's Orchestra playing I don't mind. Dave finished with Chris Barber's Jazz Band playing 'I never knew just what a girl could do!

Everyone is welcome at our next meeting which is on Tuesday 23 April at 2 pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Sue Tringham

Bridge Group



The Bridge Group is friendly, sociable, and keen to encourage new members. We also offer encouragement to "rusty" ex- players. The Group meets every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Methodist Hall Side Room next to the kitchen.

John Yeomans

Chinwags



The first meeting on 25th February at the OPP. Was successful. Having a room for ourselves made the topic juries easier to discuss. Lunchtime on the 25th March has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Next meeting will be on 22nd April at 12.00 at the OPP. Please let me know if you are coming.

Belinda Sylvestor

The Choir



We now have an exciting new repertoire of songs from the Musicals. We enjoy our Friday practices and hopefully you will enjoy our concert on Friday 28th June at 2-30pm in the Methodist Church Hall. Tickets will be on sale at the main meeting £3-00 (including Tea & Cake). Or phone 01789 204892 to reserve tickets. We only have 150. We look forward to entertaining you.

Dorothy Jones

Classical Music Group



This Interest Group is at present in abeyance. If anyone is interested in organising a group, a number of former members will be interested in joining you.

Aline Cummings

Computer Group at Stratford School.

The courses for Beginners and Improvers are under way. Beginners are receiving one to one help and Improvers have chosen topics or problems to be solved. e.g. address labels, shopping on-line, power point presentation, producing tables, digital camera skills, internet research.

After the Easter break we meet again on 11th and 25th April to complete this course.

We plan to offer 5 more sessions before the Summer break, starting on Thursday, 9th May and concluding on July 11th. (2nd and 4th Thursdays, 4pm to 6pm.) The cost of the sessions is determined by numbers attending to cover the hire of the computer room. To enrol, please sign the sheet on the notice board table or contact Ron or Robyn. (Note: The school now offers wireless connection for laptops, i-pads, smart phones etc. so members may bring their own equipment to the class)

Robyn Nicoll

Creative Craft Group

We are looking forward to seeing an exquisite display of quilts and quilting techniques by Jane Sully at our **next meeting on 18th April**. Anyone is welcome to come along to this special afternoon. We will be meeting in the side room from 2pm to 4pm.

The Crafters will be supporting Transition Stratford's campaign, "Take the Plastic Challenge", by making fabric carrier bags to distribute at the River Festival on 6th and 7th July. We will be having a sewing workshop at our May meeting on **Thursday afternoon 16th May** to begin making the bags and will be joined by Barbara Cooper from Transition Stratford who will be bringing the pattern and sewing machines. Help with this project would be greatly appreciated to cut, pin or stitch and/or to supply us with suitable fabric e.g. canvas, sturdy curtain material etc.

Roma Rudd.

Card Making Group



Another very enjoyable day last Friday (15th March). Our present charity being Avon Cat Rescue. At the next general meeting there will be a half price sale, so come and get some bargains. We would welcome suggestions for the next charity to support. Next meeting is Friday 26th April. All new members welcome, contact me for details. Carolyn Leach 01789 266194

Carolyn Leach

Dinahs



We met 5th March at The Red Lion, centre of town. A first visit for a few of us, we were pleasantly surprised. The prices have gone up at a number of restaurants in town, and with austerity!! (we have to watch the pennies) The Red Lion is very reasonable. Also an alcoved

room with a large oval table that seats 10, we could hear ourselves talk without any distractions. The service was good, the waitor was very attentive. We chatted about going on holiday on your own. An adventure I have not tried yet. One of us had travelled to Japan on their own, while another was off to Italy . There is a thought: you only have yourself to worry about, and please. Firemen and alarms were discussed, and plastics can be a nightmare. I.T. modems etc, trying to keep up to date with information technology. We next meet Tuesday 2nd April at The Red Lion. Sylvía Crooks.

Discussion Group



7 The report for the meeting held on Wednesday 13th March will be in the May Newsletter as Sue Tringham is on holiday at the moment. Our next meeting will be on March 10th at the Windmill.

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



The next meeting will be Thursday 25th April when the computer group will be meeting. You are also welcome to meet with the Computer Group and research Family History on-line on Thursday 11th April. Meet at Stratford High School 3.45 for 4.00pm.

Sue Ocock

Garden History Group



This new group has now had two meetings, during which we followed the on-line Garden History course, discussing respectively Roman and Medieval Gardens. Each member brought additional information and we had lively discussions on all aspects of gardening in the two eras. Our next meeting is in late March, when we will be embarking on the study of Elizabethan Gardens, a subject on which there is much more information available.

We are a small group and would welcome new members, either to undertake the rest of the course, or perhaps one segment in which they have a particular interest. For further information please email: katharine.stuart@gmail.com

Meetings take place on Tuesday afternoons from 2.30-4.30, every 2 or 3 weeks, depending on schedules." Katharine Stuart

Grumpy Old Men Group



"What benefits have we got from our "Special Relationship" with the U.S.A", this months discussion topic could have been a difficult one to generate much involvement from the Group but thanks to the wide ranging introduction by Elliot Cave (Grump of the Month) this was far from the case.

Taking us from the early days of the GB/US relationship via the inter war years, World War 2 where traditionally the phrase "special relationship" was coined, GI Brides, the location of many large

American companies in the UK, scientific cooperation, films, music, etc., etc., Elliot concluded it had been and still was beneficial. The sharing of a common language is undoubtedly an important factor in fostering the relationship. Some (moderately) impassioned exchanges took place as members expressed their opinions on the pros and cons of our close association with the US particularly with regard to the Lend/Lease arrangements of WW2 and our ability to influence decisions which could be beneficial to GB. It was felt that as the special relationship was not between equal partners inevitably it was biased towards what the US wanted and an attitude of "we hear what you say and if it suits us we will do it".

Next meeting - Wed. 17th April Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre.

Subject - TO BE ADVISED (NB Vision for Stratford postponed) Introduced by TBA.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



We are continuing to make good progress, thanks to our new members and the continuing help from the established ringers. OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON 8TH APRIL - do come along and join us, we still have room for more ringers.

Please contact Ron | CAstleton on 01789 205 878 or ron.castleton@tiscali.co.uk.

Ron Castleton

History Group



At the March meeting Beryl Escott, who retired from the RAF with the rank of Squadron Leader, talked to us about "Women in the SOE (Special Operations Executive)." The SOE was set up by an Act of Parliament soon after WW2 started to encourage resistance in the countries occupied by the Germans. Beryl dealt particularly with the F Section – France. Women were required who could be trained as wireless operators, could use codes and were french speakers. They were parachuted into France to organise drops of arms comembers or the Resistance could carry out acts of sabotage

against factories, railways, etc. Of the 500 agents sent to France, 50 were women and only 12 survived the war. Beryl said a typical agent was Yvonne Baseden, daughter of a French father and an English mother, who was eventually caught, tortured and sent to the Ravensbruck concentration camp. She was released when Count Bernadotte and the Swedish Red Cross organised an exchange of prisoners. When the war ended, the surviving agents were demobbed and did not receive pensions.

On Monday 8th April Joy Leslie is going to continue describing the role of women in history. This time she will talk about "The Life of the Medieval Woman".

Sheela Burchill

Keep Fit Group



Who is brave enough to come and join us at Keep Fit on Thursday mornings at 10.00 am in Shottery Church Hall. Contact Mary Palmer on 01789 204707 or Joy Baylis on 01789 266661.

Mary Palmer

Opera Group



We met at Sandra's on 27th February to see a 2008 performance of La Boheme from The Metropolitan Opera. This was a very elaborate staging with luxurious costumes and very complicated scenery changes between acts. The filming was excellent with plenty of close up views where the action needed it. The Romanian soprano Angela Gheorghiu sang the part of the doomed Mimi and of course Puccini's most

popular arias were well exploited. Our next meeting will be on 27th March at Pam and Alan's

Alan Howland

Pilates Group



Every Monday at St. Andrew's Parish hall Shottery between 12:15 and 1:15. For more information contact Gill Ganner.

Play Reading Group



Play Reading Group does not meet until Thursday 28thMarch. We look forward to finishing "Hobson's Choice". Also begin another play which I can tell you about next month. We will meet in April on Thursday the 18th. If you would like to join us please ring Sylvia Crooks on 01789 416965.

Poetry and Prose



The March meeting was unfortunately cancelled again due to unforeseen circumstances. I have taken the decision to cease any further meetings for the time being. If anyone is interested in taking over the Poetry Appreciation Group, perhaps you would contact me. Many thanks to all the Group members for such enjoyable afternoons of poetry over the last few years.

Anne Davies

Reading Group - Monday



This month we had "The Sense of an Ending" by Julian Barnes, 2011 Booker prize. When we discussed this book, at first we thought it was a bit boring. However, we changed our minds after talking at length about it. We realised why Julian Barnes had won the 2011 Booker Prize. A Short Book; it covers a whole life span of the narrator, Tony, from adolescence to old age. When he is shocked by a letter

he wrote when young; he is genuinely shaken. "My younger self had come back to shock my older self with what that self had been, or was, or sometimes capable of being". Phyliss is on holiday in Oman. Sorry she missed the meeting and cake.

Sylvía Crooks

Reading Group - Wednesday



Our book this month was "MARCH" by Geraldine Brooks. In the novel "March", the father of Louisa Alcott's Little Women, left his wife and four daughters to join the forces of the North in the first year of the American Civil War. Everyone in the group enjoyed reading the novel, thought it was well written and the characters believable. We found the cruelty by the slave owners quite horrendous and the turmoil and effects of the war were very graphic. We also felt that we would like to read "Little

Women" again. Our novel this month is "Cranford".

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group - Friday



This month we read "Miss Garnets Angel"s by Sally Vickers. This was a well written book and the story has many layers. The descriptions of Venice made us all want to go immediately. We would recommend this book.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



There were only a few of us this montyh but we still enjoyed a programme of varied rock & roll music and some animated discussion.

Coral Bradley

Science and Nature Group



Our March meeting was very well attended, with thirty five present. Quite a squeeze in the front lounge! Clive Henderson, Immediate Past Chairman of the Inland Waterways Association, gave us a very interesting talk on the history of the Stratford Canal with lots of old photographs of bye-gone days. We learnt that Stratford was a very important inland port with busy warehouses by the Birmingham Road and on Waterside, where Bancroft Gardens and the theatre are now. Goods to and from London,

Birmingham, Worcester, Gloucester, Bristol and the North passed through Stratford on our canal and river system. The Stratford Canal was beset by financial problems, being always underfunded, and was finally closed to commercial traffic in the 1940's and left to fall into disrepair. It was entirely due to the determined efforts of a group of volunteers that it retained its status as a 'navigation', and the massive task of refurbishment and repair was undertaken in the mid 1950's and early 1960's Thank goodness for that. Stratford Town Council didn't want a 'dirty ditch' in their town and were not helpful though. Nevertheless, we now have a lovely canal basin in our town leading on to one of the prettiest canals in the country, including the longest aqueduct in the country, near Wootton Wawen.

Next meetings:

Friday 12th April - A Walk and Talk on Stratford's Building Stones followed by Tea at Hall's Croft

Geoff Bridgewater

Sunday Lunch Group



The next lunch will be on Sunday 7th April at Stratford Golf Club. The May lunch will be on Sunday 5th May at the Bistro Pierre. Names please to Brian Bradley: 01789 488551

Brían Bradley

Theatre Group.



On 18th May 2013 we go to Malvern to see "The Woman in Black" by Susan Hill. This play has been in London for some time and is now touring with very good reviews. Currently we have four seats available. The cost of this trip is £31.00. Leaving at the usual times – 12.00 from Henley and 12.30 from Stratford Leisure Centre.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



The April walk will take place on Wednesday 10th April at 10 am - and start from Lower Slaughter. As parking may be difficult we thought it a good idea if those with spaces in their car would meet at the Greenway to minimize the number of cars. We need to leave the Greenway no later than 9 15 am. The walk will be led by Elaine and Malcolm Burden – this is a five mile medium walk, should be very interesting as it is around Bourton on the Water area. I recommend good walking shoes and we could

stop at the Mill for coffee etc on the way back.

Valerie Redfern

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERT

Everyone who came to the Symphony Hall on March 21st certainly had a treat! Andris Nelsons, the young Lithuanian Musical Director thrilled his audience and inspired his orchestra with a wonderful rendition of Beethoven's 6th & 7th Symphonies. He will be conducting the orchestra at our next visit.

Gwyneth Bevins

THURSDAY 9th May 2.15pm

"Think of "dances in the sunlight", sun-kissed, glorious celebrations of Italy!. Our next concert "VIVA ITALIA" Mendelssohn, Strauss, Tchaikovsky. Payment for this concert is now due. We have about 8 places left! The cost of this visit is £26. This includes the concert ticket and return coach to the Birmingham Symphony Hall. The coach will leave the Johnsons' depot at 12noon and the Stratford Leisure Centre at 12-30pm. Cheques made payable to Heart of England U3A and sent to Dorothy Jones at 14 Ascot Close. Stratford upon Avon CV37 9FN as soon as possible. Telephone 01789 204892.

Dorothy Jones

WHATS ON IN U3A LOCALLY

Stratford: 24th April: Swords and Love notes - Stories of Kenilworth Castle- Mindy Chillery.

Shottery: 7th May - "Whistling around the World" - Simon Topman.

Dene Valley: 9th April - Robert Dudley, Queen Elizabeth and the Kenilworth Entertainment of 1575

- Gillian White .

The closing date for material for the May 2013 Newsletter is Sunday 21st April.

Group	Group Leader	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)	
All Swing and Jazz	Dennis Sully	4 th Thursday 2 - 4pm	
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish	3 rd Friday 2pm	
	Pam Collins		
Big Band Music & Jazz	Tony Badham	4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm	
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.30pm	
Card making	Carolyn Leach	As announced	
Chinwags Lunch	Belinda Sylvestor	4 th Monday 12 Noon	
Choir	Ruth Grahame	Every Friday 11.45 for 12 noon,	
	Dorothy Jones		
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm	
Creative Crafts	Roma Rudd	3 rd Thursday 2 – 4 pm	
Computers	Robyn Nicoll	2 nd and 4 th Thursday – 4 - 6pm	
Dinahs Luncheon	Sylvia Crooks	1 st Tuesday for Lunch	
Discussion	Sue Tringham	2 nd Wednesday	
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock	4 th Thursday – 4.00 pm	
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh	2 nd Tuesday – 2.00pm	
	Mavis Pickett		
Garden History	Katharine Stuart	Tuesdays As Announced	
Grumpy Old Men	Graham Mitchell	3 rd Wednesday for Lunch	
Hand Bell Ringing	Ron Castleton	Alternate Mondays 10am	
History	Janet Anslow	2 nd Monday – 2.0 pm	
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday am	
Opera	Sandra Sladden	4 th Wednesday, 2.00pm	
Pilates	Gill Ganner	Mondays – 12.15-1.15pm	
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	-see Newsletter for dates -	
Poetry Reading	Jennifer Davy	2 nd Weds. 10 – 12 am	
Poetry & Prose	Anne Davies	As appropriate	
Appreciation			
Reading – Monday	Phyllis Bailey	3 rd Monday–2.30-4.30pm	
Reading – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm	
Reading – Friday	Coral Bradley	As appropriate	
Rock & Roll Music	Coral Bradley	2 nd Thursday – 2 – 4pm	
Science & Nature	Geoff Bridgewater	2 nd Fridays 2 - 4pm	
(incorporating Bird		(or as announced)	
Watching)			
Sunday Lunch	Brian Bradley	As Appropriate	
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones &	As appropriate	
	Gwyn Bevins		
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	As appropriate	
Walking	Valerie Redfern	2 nd Wednesday 10.00am	

HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS. 2013

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<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	
		JULY	Keep Fit Group	
		AUGUST	Bridge Group	
		SEPTEMBER	Creative Crafts Group	
APRIL	Family History & Computer Groups	OCTOBER	The Choir	
MAY	Big Band Music & Jazz Group	NOVEMBER	History Group	
JUNE	Dinah's Lunch Group	DECEMBER	Pilates Group	