



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Web Address:-
www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk

Heart of England

Newsletter Editor: Edwin Lilly, 9 Addison Drive, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7PL

Telephone: 01789 204 472. Email: Edwin_lilly@yahoo.co.uk

Membership Secretary: Sue Tringham, 2 Guild Cottages, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6HD

Telephone: 01789 204 295. Email: suettrin@tesco.net

April 2015 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

Our speaker for April is Graham Sutherland & his topic is "Wicked Women. Looking at some women in history & it is up to the audience to decide whether they were wicked or 'Good Time Girls'.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our Speaker for May is David Bartley, and his talk is entitled "More Black Country Humour from David Bartley." It promises to be as entertaining as his last visit.

CHAIRMAN'S APRIL JOTTINGS

Geoff Bridgewater

Hello everyone and a very warm welcome to our April monthly meeting. Unfortunately, I won't be with you today as Heather and I will be cruising somewhere between the Canary Islands and southern Spain! However, you'll be in the very capable hands of Aline, our Vice-Chair, today. Many thanks Aline. Thanks also to all the ladies that helped set out the chairs in the hall again at last month's meeting. After my comments about the 'weaker sex' were met with such derision, perhaps some of our gentlemen may be 'persuaded' to, perhaps, arrive a little earlier and provide some 'manly muscle'. Come on chaps, help me out here!

NEW GROUPS

At our meeting for new members we had several suggestions for new groups, A Gardening group and a Practical Art group. If you are interested in either groups, contact group co-ordinators, Sandy Stewart or Dorothy Jones. Hopefully we will find enough members to form these groups and also someone to act as group leader. Sandy and Dorothy will give their help and support in helping to get the groups started.

WHAT'S ON - MONTHLY MEETINGS AT STRATFORD, SHOTTERY, DENE VALLEY & ALCESTER U3A

Stratford	- 29th April	- "Elgar, the Man and his Music"	- Stuart Freed .
Shotton	- 6th May	- "Hidden Depths: Women of the RNLI"	- Sue Hennessy.
Dene Valley	- 14th April	- "The Greatest Gardening Tips in the World"	- Steve Brookes .
Alcester	- 7th April	- "Southern Experience - a brief history of Louisiana and New Orleans"	- Ronald Gallivan.

CYCLING

The Stratford U3A Cycling Group meets at 10.00am on each Thursday morning at the Greenway carpark. They have had a winter recess but are now restarting. Why not join them for a pleasant cycle along the Greenway, stopping at some point for refreshments. Nothing too strenuous, but fresh air and enjoyment.

Please contact John Curtis for further information.

COURSES ON-LINE-FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

Robyn Nicoll

NB - On-Line Course material is being updated and will not be available to members for a short time.

The 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. The Russian History Course is being studied at the moment.

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

[National Web Site. www.u3a.org.uk Do look at the site to see all the opportunities and information available to U3A members.]

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

THE CHINA DISCUSSION GROUP

Robyn Nicoll

The group met at the end of March and the topic chosen for discussion was The Terracotta Warriors. It seems incredible that this huge mausoleum, constructed over a period of 11 years from 221BC, was discovered by chance in 1974 and has since been designated as a World Heritage site. Several members of the group have visited this site so we were treated to lots of photographs to complement our research. Members will be notified by email of the date for the next meeting and the topic suggested.

This discussion group developed following the coverage of two on-line courses studied over 3 years and a desire of the group to continue to follow their interest in China past and present. These get-togethers are informal and varied consisting of a short language session, followed by a discussion of a chosen topic often accompanied by a photo presentation and concluding with "what the papers say". Members are welcome to join us for these informal afternoons - there is no set day each month. 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 February 2015 Meeting.

The meeting this month was put together by two of our members, John Cooper and Mavis Pickett. John taking on the first half decided to give us two takes on each of his chosen tracks, what was immediately noticeable was the difference that came across between the treatments. First track was "Take the 'A' Train" The first version was by The Dave Brubeck Quartet and the second by Duke Ellington, this was followed by firstly Louis Armstrong and then Nat King Cole with "Yellow Dog Blues". "Fish Seller" came next with Humphrey Lyttelton followed by the Sidney Bechet version. Anita O'Day and Tony Coe followed on with their respective versions of "Sweet Georgia Brown". John finished his programme with "Wild Man Blues" by firstly Roy Eldridge and the Johnny Dodds Black Bottom Stompers. What was striking was how differently the tunes sounded, in some instances they could have been totally different tracks.

After the usual noisy coffee break it was back to business with Mavis leading the second half starting with "It Don't Mean a Thing" by the Bill Aldreds Goodtime Jazz Band. One word for that track is 'ROUSING' Then it was a change of tempo with Johnny Hodges playing "Hodge Podge" followed by Amy Winehouse singing "There is no Greater Love" shades of Billy Holiday there both in the voice and in her life. Next up another vocal, as a tribute to Acker Bilk him singing "Gotta see baby tonight" such a friendly voice. Change of tempo again with Stan Getz and "Sweet Miss" Then it was on to the Bob Cooper Sextet with "The Way you look Tonight" I've just realised I have included rather a lot of vocals because here comes another one with Bunny Berigan singing and playing "I can't Get Started" and then (oh dear) George Melly with "Maybe Not At All" So to finish off the programme I've put in another 'ROUSING' track with The Big 18 playing "Tuxedo Junction"

The Thanks of John and myself to Dennis for putting two such diverse halves together. Our next meeting will be on the 23rd April 2015 in the lounge of the Methodist Church, Old Town starting at 2p.m.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Sylvia Kentish & Pam Collins



In March we visited the Herbert Gallery and Museum in Coventry, which was hosting an exhibition from the Victoria and Albert Museum on 'Recording Britain'. The original concept for this project, which started in 1939, was to record 'places and buildings of characteristic national interest' in a country that was

being changed by war. The pictures recorded architecture, pastimes, landscapes, interiors, and many other vignettes of everyday life. The fact that each commissioned artist had a different perspective on what was of interest to them in everyday life, and on the style to be used, contributed to this exhibition being of great artistic and historical interest.

Our next meeting will be on April 17, when Liz Coxon (Worcester U3A) will make a presentation on Icelandic art.

BALLROOM DANCING

John B Barker



We have now met on 5 occasions since the start of the winter period with 5 more to go through April, May and June.

It has been realised that the Wednesday morning meeting at 10.30am is not popular.

Therefore, before considering a further group of Dance dates, we need suggestions from potential dancers as to the most suitable and convenient time and day.

Your suggestions please. Only when we have a majority decision can we then approach the Community Hall to reserve a fortnightly slot. Your response will be appreciated.

Next session Wednesday April 1st at 10.30am. Do come along; you will enjoy the music, friendship and fellowship and not forgetting the dancing.

BRIDGE GROUP

John Yeomans



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



Thank-you to all the members who bought our cards. £50 has been sent to 'Missing People West Midlands'. Our next charity will be 'Safeline', which provides help for abused women. The next work-shop is on April 10th.

CHINWAGS

Belinda Sylvester



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

THE CHOIR

Dorothy Jones



Our concert on Friday 20th March at the Methodist Church Hall was very successful; we had a full attendance of a very appreciative audience; the choir sang well with some difficult pieces and we had a couple of good solo pieces from Val and Bob and a very good duet from Sheila and Elaine. Our readers were very entertaining, some of the poems being created by the performers. Many thanks for your continued support.

We are so fortunate to have such a talented Musical Director. Stewart has worked very hard with us and planned a varied programme. He created a digital arrangement to enhance our vocal performance of "Good Vibrations" (a Beach Boys' song). He conceived and created the musical accompaniment. We are looking forward to our concert at Briar Croft and our Social Evening in May.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Aline Cumming



After taking a break in February and March the group will restart in April. Look for emails or check with Aline when she returns.

COMPUTER GROUP

Robyn Nicoll



Arrangements have been made to hold the computer group at the Methodist Church, taking advantage of their new wifi connection. We will be using the new room on the 2nd and 4th Thursday afternoons in April, May and June, from 2.30 to 4.00pm.

Dates to note: April 9th and 23rd; May 14th and 28th; June 11th and 25th.

There has been a very good response from members to this change so the group is now full. Also, several more members have offered to help so that one-to-one assistance can be offered. The cost for the 6 sessions - £10 to be collected on the first afternoon. (Cheque to "Heart of England U3A" please) Please contact Robyn for further information.: redbird22@hotmail.co.uk

CREATIVE CRAFT GROUP

Tricia Callaghan



No report so far this month. Check with Tricia re the next meeting in April.

A group of us will be visiting the Creative Crafts Show at Malvern Showground again this year and will be looking for more inspirations for the future (and probably spending more than a few pennies in the process)

DINAHS

Sylvia Crooks



We met on the 3rd March at the Red Lion again. Lovely to see everyone, lots of welcoming chat catching up with the events of the last month. After an enjoyable lunch we heard from Cindy about her holiday in Spain. Meeting all her friends: Cyril and Cindy lived in Spain for 20 years, so a trip to see their friends must have been great. A woman loves a scarf: a bargain at 2 euros from Spain. Also Sue showed us how to do the Mary Berry Loop with our scarves. A course about Obesity is being studied by one of us. Lots of courses are available if you go on Google – Future Learn. Also a ring road around Stratford is very much needed : but where?

We meet again on Tuesday 7th April at the Red Lion at 12.15. Happy Easter.

DISCUSSION GROUP

Athena Roderick



With Vladimir Putin apparently wishing to take back land for Russia, whether its inhabitants want that or not, we set off talking about powerful men & their ambitions. On the whole, we felt that it was a process that countries had to go through, until they reached a degree of democracy. Although, we did have our doubts about USA where strings are pulled behind the scenes, by people who may not be despotic, but are certainly not very democratic. We then looked at politicians, Worldwide, Nationally & locally & found ourselves not very impressed, but not sure if much could be done about making them more effective. We will meet again on Wed April 8th at 1.00pm at the Windmill, as usual. .

FILM GROUP

Mary Fishleigh



This month we watched a tragicomedy drama, "Life is Beautiful". It was very poignant but nevertheless had us laughing at many points when the acting and story verged on slapstick comedy. It is an Italian film made in 1997, directed by and starring Roberto Benigni, in which a Jewish Italian book shop owner must employ his fertile imagination to shield his son from the horrors of internment in a Nazi concentration camp. The film was nominated for many Academy Awards and won three – Best Music Original Score, Best Foreign Language film and Benigni won Best Actor. This film, which gives a different perspective on life in the Nazi camps, is well worth watching.

Our aim 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.

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

GAMES GROUP

Sue Tringham



With all the Bank Holidays in April and May our Games Group playing dominoes, whist and scrabble will only be able to meet on Monday 20th April and not at all in May. Hopefully in June we will revert to our regular meetings on the first and third Mondays of the month from 2 – 4pm in side room 1 of the Methodist Hall. We welcome new members so just turn up. Our next meeting is on 20th April.

GRUMPY OLD MEN GROUP

Graham Mitchell



An excellent, comprehensive and, at times, controversial presentation by Paul Burley, our Grump of the Month, kicked off our discussion on "Should we men be concerned about Girl Power". Exploring the status of women through the ages from when they were considered subservient to men and generally undervalued in their capabilities, except possibly in procreation, to the present day where there is now a considerably degree of equality between the sexes particularly in Western society, Paul suggested that the advent of WW1 had a huge positive impact on the emancipation of women when they enjoyed a degree of financial independence and wider opportunities. While conceding that there is still a long way to go and it may still take some time he maintained that female domination is a distinct possibility in the future. During subsequent discussion the Grumps displayed very diverse opinions about the rise in the prominence of women in all aspects of life but were in total agreement it is still very much "a man's world". Although, perhaps irrationally, some queried the desirability of having females in certain jobs, e.g. airline pilots and ships captains, it was felt that equal opportunity (and pay) should apply but positive discrimination in favour of women was to be avoided. We recognised that women have a unique position in society and have greater expectations for their future roles and influence but we questioned do they actually want this ever greater freedom and opportunity. Somewhat reluctantly the Group accepted the inexorable rise of Girl Power but rather than be concerned perhaps it would be better to sit back and enjoy the women's take over - while we still can!!

Next meeting - Wed. **15th** APRIL - Venue Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - Is this a good time to be old. Introduced by Colin Robberts.

HISTORY GROUP

Sheela Burchill



Our scheduled speaker at our March meeting was unwell and we were grateful to Madeleine Cox and Victoria Lawston of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust who filled the breach at very short notice to tell us about the collections of the Trust, which comprise over 55,000 books, over 1 million documents (some dating back to the 12th century), photographs, artefacts and works of art. Madeleine gave us illustrated information sheets about particular "treasures": a 1541 edition of Cranmer's Bible, a coloured 16th century map of London, a Hundred Merry Tales (1526) to which Beatrice refers in "Much Ado About Nothing" and some of which was used to teach English and Italian languages, and illustrations of the 1769 festival organised by David Garrick, which kick started the tourist industry.

As our scheduled speaker was to have talked about the First World War in Stratford, Victoria had prepared information sheets about that. There was a poster about a concert and dance in aid of the Belgian Refugee Fund, a letter to the mayor offering a house in Loxley for the refugees, photos of yeomanry troops leaving Stratford in 1915, the V.A.D. Hospital in the Town Hall and the Hampshire Regiment's return from Gallipoli in 1916. Particularly poignant are the extracts from the diary written by Corporal Harry Fox from August 1914 until January 1917: terrible weather, rats, sick horses, enemy fire, cold nights, frozen boots (I was struck by his reference to the fact that grey horses were not required at the front because of their colour).

The Reading Room at the Shakespeare Centre is open free of charge (Wednesday - Saturday).

On Monday 13th April David Ball is giving a talk on the History of the Black Country...

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.

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 did not meet on the 3rd Thursday because of the choir rehearsal. On Thursday 26th March we will continue reading "For Better For Worse" by Arthur Watkin. 10.30 Coffee at Sylvia's.

READING GROUP – MONDAY

Phyllis Bailey



Most of us enjoyed the book recommended by the Wednesday Reading Group. We like how it all began, and were impressed with the writer's ability to make the characters so 'real' in so few words! The professionalism of Penelope Lively was evident all through and her grasp of the experience of life at old age (She is now 82) was impressive. She is also now a Dame!

Alas the books for next month have not arrived due to my having a new router on my PC and not ordering in time. They should be here tomorrow so I will deliver them in due course.

READING GROUP – WEDNESDAY

Dorothy Jones



This month we read *To a Mountain in Tibet* by Colin Thubborn. He joins pilgrims on a trek to Mount Kailas, the most sacred of the world's mountains. It was an arduous journey from Nepal, through the high passes of Tibet. The majority of our group found the novel very tiring and gave up. However, Ruth googled all the villages, lakes and mountains and really enjoyed the journey, reaching Mount Kailas quite exhausted!

READING GROUP – FRIDAY

Coral Bradley



We read "The Man in the Picture" by Susan Hill. It is a ghost story and she is really very good at this genre but we thought that she 'lost the plot' at the end of the book with the conclusion.

ROCK & ROLL GROUP

Coral Bradley



We had a wander through some rock music and had examples from the different periods of rock with some interesting discussion about the artists and the way their music changed.

SCIENCE, NATURE & THINGS TECHNICAL GROUP

Edwin Lilly



At the meeting on Friday 13th March 2015 our Chairman, Geoff Bridgewater, gave an illustrated talk about aspects and secrets of Holy Trinity Church. He has given guided talks of the church for several years until recently. Guided tours are no longer available at the church so this was a treat not to be missed. He gave some information about the early history of the church and also described some of the architecture and

decoration of the building. A fuller account with a few pictures can be seen in the Winter 2015 Magazine, either at the main U3A meeting or on our website. Thanks to Geoff for a very entertaining and informative talk. Our next meeting is on Friday 10th April when Ian Roberts will give a talk entitled "The Perfect Cuppa".

SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

Brian Bradley



The lunch on the 5th. April will now be at the Navigation, Wooton Wawen. Names please to Brian Bradley, tel: 01789 488551.

The May lunch will be at the Henley Golf Club.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS

Dorothy Jones



May 6th 2015 2-15pm.

The concert is now fully booked. We do have a reserve list.

Please remember we are leaving the Leisure centre at 12-15pm and picking up our Henley group at Johnsons Depot.

THEATRE GROUP.

Coral Bradley



On 11 April we will go to Malvern to see "Arcadia"; all the tickets for this have been sold. The usual meeting places will be Henley 12.00 & the Leisure Centre at 12.30.

On 30 May we will go to Malvern again to see "The Importance of Being Earnest" with David Suchet. At the time of writing there are two place available. The cost is £32.00

Another date for your diaries is 27 June 2015 to see "The Murder Business". This is a psychological thriller which had a very successful run in the West End for 9 years..

WALKING GROUP

Valerie Redfern



We had a smaller than usual group on our last walk in March. We started from the river side car park in Shipston-on-Stour and walked on hard surfaces in a rectangular circuit out to Burmington village, stopping for a drink in the churchyard extension at Burmington Church. A nice dry walk.

Our next walk starts from the Bancroft Gardens (by the Gower Memorial) and we walk over the Welcome Hills. Please wear good walking shoes as the going may be muddy at times. Also bring along any refreshments you may need for the mid-walk stop,

MEMORY COURSE

Athena has organised and been running a 'Guinea pig' course with eleven other volunteers. This course was first run by Ormskirk and District U3A a few years ago and has been very popular. Several other U3As have run the course. See next month's Newsletter for a fuller report on how the course has run and how the volunteers saw it—that is if you can remember about it next time! There will also be a full and illustrated report in the Spring Magazine.

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>GROUP LEADER</u>	<u>USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)</u>
All That Swing & Jazz	Dennis Sully	4th Thursday 2.00—4.00pm
AmDram & Supper	Geoff Bridgewater	As Announced
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins	3rd Friday 2.00pm
Ballroom Dancing	John Barker	1st & 3rd Wednesday 10.30—12.00
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.00pm
Card Making	Carolyn Leach	As Announced
China Discussion Group	Robyn Nicoll	See Newsletter
Chinwags Lunch	Belinda Sylvestor	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	To Be Announced
Dinahs Luncheon	Sylvia Crooks	1st Tuesday for lunch
Discussion	Athena Roderick	2nd Wednesday
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett	2nd Tuesday 2.00pm
Games	Sue Tringham	1st & 3rd Monday 2.00—4.00pm
Grumpy Old Men	Graham Mitchell	3rd Wednesday for lunch
History	Janet Anslow	2nd Monday 2.00pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday 10.00am
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 & 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

HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
April 2015	Ballroom Dancing Group	July 2015	All That Swing and Jazz Group
May 2015	Dinahs Luncheon	August 2015	Art Appreciation
June 2015	History Group	September 2015	Bridge