



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Website address:-
www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk

Heart of England

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January 2014 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

Our speaker for January 2nd is Ronald Gallivanl talking about "Singapore, The Lion City". History, culture and flavour of the most racially harmonious State in S.E Asia. Founded by Stamford Raffles, for whom the famous hotel is named.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for February will be Jennifer Stone who will talk about "Women on the Stage"

CHAIRMAN'S JANUARY JOTTINGS

Geoff Bridgewater

Hello everyone and welcome to our January monthly meeting. Well, it's goodbye to the old year and a warm hello to 2014. I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and celebrated the start of the New Year, perhaps, with a 'wee dram'. I did, and then I had another one! We'll raise our glasses at the New Year's Lunch on Saturday, the 18th of this month and I look forward to seeing many of you there. The toast will be 'Fun and friendship at the Heart of England U3A'.

Your committee and most of the group leaders held their twice yearly get-together at the end of November and what emerged from the lively discussion was that pretty well all our 32 groups, with one or two more in the pipeline, are thriving. If you fancy trying a particular interest group, or even have a suggestion for a new group, don't hesitate to contact Dorothy or Sandy, our Groups Coordinators.

With all good wishes and good health in 2014.

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

Stratford - No details for 2014.

Shottery - No details for 2014.

Dene Valley - No details for 2014.

Alcester - January 7th - "The history of the English Language" - David Howe.

WATCH THE WEBSITE

Click onto our website and keep up to date with the Magazine. What else would you like to see featured on the website?

www.heartofenglandu3a.btck.co.uk Or Google "Heart of England U3A"

Internet access can be obtained free for an hour at Stratford Library with your library card and there is always some one about to help you.

COURSES ON-LINE-FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

Robyn Nicoll

Tutored Courses are being offered now. Details may be found by visiting the national U3A web site easily accessed via our Heart of England Web Site. A fee is payable for these courses and 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"**

Note: There is no charge for the Untutored Courses.

A list of these courses may be found on the notice board and all have been downloaded over the past 2 years. 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. A course on Russian History is available so let Robyn know if interested.

Courses are also offered from the Australian U3A. (there is a fee to register and a charge for courses) 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.

For more information, please contact Robyn - redbird22@hotmail.co.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

THE CHINA GROUP

Robyn Nicoll

We extend an invitation to join us for afternoon tea on **Friday, 31st January, from 2.30 to 4.30 at the Methodist Church.** We have completed the U3As' On-line courses but we are planning to start an **informal discussion group** with the main focus on current affairs in China and neighbouring countries. There is an abundance of news from that area and therefore no shortage of topics.

The 31st January coincides with **Chinese New Year** so we will be finding out more about the traditions and celebrations to discuss on that afternoon.

Also, one of our members, Patricia Wy, has offered to teach us some basic phrases in Mandarin.

Do join us for this new format or find out more from Robyn Nicoll (redbird22@hotmail.co.uk)

or David Ralph (david@ralphhome.com)

ALL SWING & JAZZ GROUP

Mavis Pickett

Report of the November 2013 Meeting.



This month's programme was a real mixture of treats, the first half ranged from a very cool treatment by Barney Kessell of "Blues in the Night" to an 'all out' version of "Summit Ridge Drive" played by Boots Randolph...a real show stopper. Between these extremes were singer Chris Connor (echoes of Anita O'Day), Ben Webster and Johnny Hodges, Humph and a lovely cornet version of "Moon River" by Bobby Hackett. The first half finished with a melody of "Younger than Springtime/Surly with a Fringe on Top" a beautiful arrangement played by the Marty Paich Big Band.

After our usual refreshments it was straight into "Gatsby" played by Bob Thiele and his Orchestra (a nice touch of the Charleston). Then "A Woman is a Sometime Thing" from Porgy and Bess which featured Louis Armstrong singing with Russell Garcia and his Orchestra. We had in complete contrast the Joe Daniels Jazz Group playing a classic Dixie track "Wolverine Blues". Another blues track "Jazz City Blues" played by the Conte Candoli Quintet showed the difference in blues interpretation. "Flying Down to Rio" came next (I thought...Bob Hope and Bing Crosby and ooh Dorothy Lamour) but it was not to be no, it was a piano solo by Andre Previn. Having only recently heard of Chick Henderson it was a treat to hear him sing "Change Partners" with the Joe Loss Orchestra. The afternoon finished with Harry 'Sweets' Edison and his Orchestra playing "K.M. Blues".

Thank you Dennis once again. Don't forget we meet each month on the 4th Thursday in the lounge of the Methodist Church (PLEASE NOTE THIS WILL PROBABLY CHANGE FOR OUR JANUARY MEETING OWING TO BUILDING WORK). All are welcome and our next meeting will be on 23rd of January 2014.

Can we wish you all a Very Good New Year.

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Pam Collins



In December we enjoyed good food and good company at our annual Christmas get-together at Bistrot Pierre. On January 17 we will meet at a member's home to discuss our personal art selections. For more information please contact either Sylvia (01789 263794) or Pam (01789 774712).

BIG BAND MUSIC AND JAZZ GROUP

Sue Tringham



Love to have more jazz enthusiasts coming to our meetings. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 28th January 2014 in the Lounge at the Methodist Hall from 2 – 4pm.

BRIDGE CLUB

John Yeomans



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.

CARD MAKING GROUP

Caroline Leach



Our next workshop will be on Friday 10th January. We did so well with the sale of Christmas cards that we have decided to make £100 the target for the Child Support Group of the Shakespeare Hospice. New members will be most welcome. Call me for further details, Carolyn on 01789 266194.

CHINWAGS

Belinda Sylvester



There was no meeting during December. Our next meeting will be Monday 27th January 2014 .

THE CHOIR

Dorothy Jones



We have had a successful and enjoyable year in 2013. Our membership has increased and we have welcomed several men, always welcome! We entertained The Stratford Society after their Christmas lunch on December 1st at Swan's Nest Hotel. Our annual Christmas Concert at the Methodist Hall was a sell out, and many thanks to everyone who supported us. A super Audience! Our final concert is on December 20th at Briarscroft Residential Home. We are all very enthusiastic and love our Friday sessions. Stewart Wallace, our Musical Director is amazing, we all appreciate his musical talent. Our own Gareth Malone! Our first meeting in 2014 will be Friday 10th January, probably in the new side room.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GROUP

Aline Cumming



Once again at Bridge Cottage we watched the first two programmes 'In Search of Beethoven'. They covered his early career and his move to Vienna to study with the great composers of his day, Mozart and Haydn. A selection of conductors, pianists, and musical historians commented on his life and the way he changed music by his style of composing. He wrote chamber music for the piano at first, and we heard examples, then he embarked on orchestral works. The excerpts were sufficiently long for us to appreciate the points that were being illustrated. After tea and chat we listened to the first movement of Beethoven's first symphony, composed in his early twenties. Next month we meet at Bridge Cottage on **Tuesday** 28 January at 2pm, PLEASE note change of day.

COMPUTER GROUP AT STRATFORD SCHOOL.

Robyn Nicoll



The Computer Courses for Beginners and Improvers will resume in the Spring if sufficient numbers of members are interested in attending these short courses of 5 to 6 sessions. Sessions will be held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays from 4pm to 6pm at Stratford School, Alcester Road. The courses offered are listed on the notice board and via a leaflet on the notice board table. Please sign the sheet if interested in any of them or contact Ron(01789 205878) or Robyn (01789 417935). Also, offer to help at the sessions would be greatly appreciated.

The Computer Group and Family History Group share the room. A course for FH research is included with specialist help given by Sue Ocock and Edwin Lilly.

(Note: The school now offers wireless connection for laptops, i-pads, tablets, smart phones etc. so members may bring their own equipment to the class. Several members volunteer to help at the sessions and can therefore provide one-to-one assistance if necessary)

CREATIVE CRAFT GROUP

Robyn Nicoll for Roma Rudd



Our first meeting of the year will be held on **Thursday, 16th January from 2 – 4 pm.** We will be completing unfinished projects and planning new ones for the coming months. We would welcome any newcomers and in particular, new ideas.

Our workshops are fun and informal and we do enjoy a good chat at the same time. More information from Robyn, deputising for Roma Rudd.

DINAHS

Sylvia Crooks



The 3rd December seems a long time ago when Dinahs went to the Vintners for our Christmas meal. We were made very welcome upstairs; where we sat at a round, square table!! Well its square with the corners rounded. There were crackers on the table. I had not expected crackers as the booking was early in the month, so I bought some and took them along. Never mind they will be used at home.

We chatted about Bulgarians in London, Africa, Senegal. Leaks in toilets making a terrible mess when you are away from home for the week-end. Should you turn the water off when you go away? Home insurance!! Getting the bus to Birmingham: it can be quite an interesting trip.

Dinahs hope everyone had a lovely Christmas with their families. Also a Healthy 2014.

We next meet Tuesday 7th January. Venue to be decided.

DISCUSSION GROUP

Athena Roderick



As it was nearly Christmas, we didn't really have a topic & we spent quite a lot of time in chit-chat. We did talk a little about Edwin's plans for the future of Communications within our U3A, but felt that we needed more information about his ideas. We had a quick round up of National News & exchanged news about other members of HOE & what we are doing for Christmas etc. We wished each other Happy Festive Season & will meet up again, all being well, on Wed. January 8th, but maybe not at The Windmill, as it probably will have started it 's refurbishment.

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Sue Ocock



U3A Family History Group will be taking a short break during January and February. Look for announcements in the spring about future meetings.

FILM GROUP

Mary Fishleigh



Our December meeting saw us heading towards Xmas with seasonal refreshments, a short film quiz and a heart warming British comedy to watch. "Saving Grace" starring Brenda Blethyn proved to be an enjoyable film very suitable to cheer us from the gloomy weather outside. The film has received several awards and many nominations for awards, and we agreed that it was worthy of them. Our quiz tested our memory for well known quotations from films.

We welcomed some new members to the meeting and look forward to seeing them next year. We have room for more people and can promise an enjoyable and thought provoking programme. 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 14th January at 2pm at the Methodist Church, probably in the rear lounge/meeting room. Do come and join us.

GAMES GROUP

Sue Tringham



The games group meets on the first and third Monday of the month from 2 – 4pm. At the moment we are meeting at 2 Guild Cottages, Church Street. It is very informal and we seem to be enjoying ourselves! For anyone else who would like to join the group my details are on the newsletter or just turn up.

GRUMPY OLD MEN GROUP

Graham Mitchell



To be grumpy at our December gathering would have taken a great deal of effort as merriment abounded from the start due to the mass pulling of crackers, donning of paper hats, reading of cracker "jokes" and the entertaining contributions to our discussion - "Does the car we drive reflect our personality". In his introduction Ross Ward gave us 3 possibilities to consider. YES - as apart from our clothes our car is the most visible indicator to other people of whom we are. NO - if you are not a "car person" it will not say anything about you but only define the use for which the car is required. PERHAPS - the car often reflects peoples circumstances rather than their personality. However with owners of "showy" cars it could demonstrate how they would hope to be perceived but wishes rarely come true! In the general discussion the Grumps strongly supported the "circumstances" idea as, particularly when young, their choice of "wheels" was very dependant on their financial state and not what they desired. In later life, the personality factor was often suppressed by their employers policy on the type of company car they could have (shame poor things!!!). As could be anticipated we were entertained with anecdotes of experiences in bygone days when driving a car was often a journey into the unknown. A good time was had by all. The perfect entree to the festive season.

Next meeting - Wednesday January 15th 2014. Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - I Remember When.....Introduction - All Grumps.

HISTORY GROUP

Sheela Burchill



In December some members of the Group enjoyed a Christmas lunch at The Windmill pub before the meeting. Our scheduled speaker was unable to come so Tony Whiteley stepped into the breach and showed us a DVD about Sulgrave Manor. (Members who have been in the Heart of England U3A since it was formed will remember that a visit to Sulgrave was our first outing). The DVD was mainly the history of the Washington family who are first recorded in the 12th Century. They prospered as wool merchants in Tudor times and after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536 the head of the family, Lawrence Washington, an opportunist who became the Mayor of Northampton, was able to buy his own estates at Sulgrave. He twice married well and had 11 children by his second wife, all of whom survived their childhood. In the Civil War the family supported the King and were involved in the battles of Edgehill and Cropredy Bridge. At the end of the war John Washington was 19 and saw his future as a merchant trader; he was a skilled sailor and willing to take risks. With a small inheritance from his mother he bought goods in Europe and in 1656 arrived in Virginia, intending to return to England with a cargo of tobacco. But the overladen ship sank, ruining the tobacco and leaving John penniless and unable to return home. He married the daughter of Nathaniel Pope and

for the next ten years prospered. Three generations later, in 1732, George Washington was born and eventually became the first President of the newly independent USA. The rise of the Washington family in the USA is seen as mirroring the success of the family in Tudor times.

At our next meeting on Monday 13th January, Jess Stone is going to talk about the history of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

KEEP FIT GROUP



The Keep Fit Group has shrunk and we would like some new members. It is not like school and we have a great time exercising our mouths as well as our bodies. Everyone works at their own level and Debbie, our tutor, is excellent. The cost is approx. £4.50 per session payable at the beginning of the month. If you would like to come for a taster ring Mary Palmer on 204707. Thursday mornings at 10.00 am in Shottery Church Hall.

OUTINGS AND TRIPS

Coral Bradley



JUST A REMINDER. All outings, theatre trips and going to the CBSO are open to all members. Some other trips are arranged by group leaders and from time to time there are vacancies that other members can take up with arrangement with the group leader. The 'rules' for all such visits are the same. Bookings for any visit or outing have to be made many months before the actual visit takes place and they are often very expensive with money being paid almost up front. When a member puts their name down for one of these events they are deemed to be going on that event and need to pay when their name is accepted. If the member is unable to go to the event, and there is a waiting list, the group leader will try to resell the ticket, but this is not always possible. The Heart of England U3A cannot subsidise these events, so no refunds are possible, so the member is advised to try to sell their ticket/place themselves and to tell the group leader what they have done. Mostly it works like clockwork although group leaders often have their fingers crossed.

PILATES GROUP - MONDAY



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

PILATES GROUP - WEDNESDAY



Weekly 10.30 to 11.30 at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Shottery. For more information call Sue Workman on 297061.

PLAY READING GROUP

Sylvia Crooks



We met on the 19th December at Sylvia's house. After coffee and mince pies we read "The Clouded Star" a nativity play by John Purvis. Very festive and brought a tear. We next meet Thursday 16th January 2014 at Sylvia house. If you would like to come along please ring Sylvia on 01789 416965.

The Play Reading Group wish you a Healthy 2014.

READING GROUP - MONDAY

Phyllis Bailey



We read Untold Story by Monica Ali..an imaginary tale ..a 'what if' theme about princess Diana if she had not died. Some of us felt the idea was rather tasteless and the story less than engaging. 'Not recommended ' was the verdict. We look forward with some trepidation to the new system the library is starting in Jan. We will be limited in our choice by availability to suit our meeting

READING GROUP – WEDNESDAY

Dorothy Jones



Our book in December was 'A Winter in Arabia'. Several members read the book and found it fascinating with lavish, lush descriptions. Our December meeting was held at 'The Opposition' in Sheep Street, where we enjoyed a super lunch and had a good chat! Our next meeting will be at Sheela's on January 15th.

READING GROUP – FRIDAY

Coral Bradley



This month we had a book of poems by Seamus Heaney. It was enjoyable to dip into the book and to find poems that 'spoke' to us.

ROCK & ROLL GROUP

Coral Bradley



There was not a Rock & Roll Group meeting in December. The next meeting will be on Thursday 9th January.

SCIENCE AND NATURE GROUP

Sandra Sladden



On December the 13th we had our Christmas Social. Everybody brought plates of food which made a great buffet. Geoff devised a fiendish quiz which had us all going bald as we scratched our heads for the answers!

On January 10th there will be DVD about the building of the Bell Rock Lighthouse.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS - THURSDAY 13TH MARCH 2.15PM

Dorothy Jones

All the seats have been booked but I am still waiting for payment from 11 members. I need to pay for tickets in January. Please send cheques, £30, made out to Heart of England U3A, to Dorothy Jones 14, Ascot Close, Stratford upon Avon CV37 9FN. I will still take names for a reserve list!

SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP

Brian Bradley



There will not be a Sunday Lunch in January. The next lunch is 2nd February 2014 and will be at Kings Court, Alcester.

THEATRE GROUP.

Coral Bradley



On 15 February 2014 we will go to Malvern Theatre to see 'The Perfect Murder'. This has Les Dennis and Claire Goose in it so should be good. The cost is £30.00 and names and money will be taken in January. We will leave from Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30.

A date for your diaries – 29 March 2014. I have booked 'Eternal Love' which is the story of Abelard & Heloise performed by the English Touring Theatre and comes from the Globe. This is the same group who performed Anne Boleyn last year. This is also at Malvern. Names and money in February.

WALKING GROUP

Valerie Redfern



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 8th January 2014 at 10.00.am. Venue and walk route will be notified later by email. I recommend good walking boots or stout walking shoes and also that you bring a drink along with you.

ARCHIVES

Edwin Lilly

New items in the archives is a report of the Walking Group for December, a report of the Choir Concert in December and a report for the Science and Nature Group for December. I would very much like to receive more items - reports, photographs, etc for the archives. I would particularly like to occasionally visit groups that we do not currently feature in reports for the archives and take a few photographs of proceedings. If you would like to be included please do talk to me at the monthly meetings or send me an email.

Look for more news next month!

| Group | Group Leader | Usual Meeting Day (Monthly) |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| All That Swing & Jazz | Dennis Sully | 4 th Thursday 2 - 4pm |
| Art Appreciation | Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins | 3 rd Friday 2pm |
| Big Band Music and Jazz | Tony Badham | 4 th Tuesday 2 - 4pm |
| 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 Dorothy Jones | Every Friday 11.45 for 12 noon |
| Classical Music | Aline Cumming | 3 rd Monday 2.00pm |
| Creative Crafts | Roma Rudd | 3 rd Thursday 2 - 4pm |
| Computers | Robyn Nicoll | 2 nd & 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 4.00pm |
| Film Group | Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett | 2 nd Tuesday 2.00pm |
| Games | Sue Tringham | 1st and 3 rd Mondays 2.00 - 4.00 |
| Grumpy Old Men | Graham Mitchell | 3 rd Wednesday for lunch |
| History | Janet Anslow | 2 nd Monday 2.00pm |
| Keep Fit | Mary Palmer | Every Thursday 10am |
| Opera | Sandra Sladden | 4 th Wednesday 2.00pm |
| Pilates - Monday | Gill Ganner | Mondays 12.15 - 1.15 |
| Pilates - Wednesday | Sue Workman | Wednesdays 10.30 - 11.30 |
| Play Reading | Sylvia Crooks | - See Newsletter for dates - |
| Poetry Reading | Jennifer Davey | 2 nd Wednesday 10 - 12noon |
| Reading - Monday | Phyllis Bailey | 3 rd Monday 2.30 - 4.30pm |
| Reading - Wednesday | Dorothy Jones | 3 rd Wednesday 2.30pm |
| Reading - Friday | Coral Bradley | As Appropriate |
| Rock & Roll Music | Coral Bradley | 2 nd Thursday 2.00 - 4.00pm |
| Science & Nature (Incorporating Bird Watching) | Geoff Bridgewater | 2 nd Fridays 2.00 - 4.00pm (Or as announced) |
| Sunday Lunch | Brian Bradley | As Appropriate |
| Symphony Hall Visits | Dorothy Jones Gwyn Bevins | As appropriate |
| Theatre Visits & Outings | Coral Bradley | As appropriate |
| Walking | Valerie Redfern | 2 nd Wednesday 10.00am |

HEART OF ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS

| <u>MONTH - 2013</u> | <u>GROUP</u> | <u>MONTH - 2014</u> | <u>GROUP</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| | | May 2014 | Chinwags |
| | | June 2014 | Sunday Lunch |
| January 2014 | All Swing & Jazz | July 2014 | Science & Nature |
| February 2014 | Art Appreciation | August 2014 | Walking Group |
| March 2014 | Rock & Roll Music | September 2014 | Grumpy Old Men |
| April 2014 | Classical Music | | |