



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England

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March 2013 Newsletter

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Our Speaker for March is Anne Halsey. Her topic is The Baldwin Boat Trust, which is a Charity started by Anne's husband for the benefit of disabled and or elderly people.

NEXT MONTH'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. "

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

Welcome to our March meeting, which is half way through the current Heart of England U3A year.

At this stage it is good to see an increase in our membership and a number of new interest groups being formed.

It is probably a good time to mention that 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 involved with U3A and would be interested in joining the committee with a view to taking on this role please speak to me or to Geoff.

David Sladden

New Group – Film Group

This group will aim to show films which are not now on general release and to generate discussion on the content, subject and artists involved. The types of film which will be considered include classic drama & comedy, foreign language, art and cult films. This is not aimed to be a cheap way to see modern blockbusters or the latest released films. The first meeting will be at 2pm on 8th April in the Methodist Church Hall Lounge and from then on the second Tuesday each month.

Mary Fishleigh

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.

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

EQUIPMENT

A fully automatic 35mm Slide Projector with two slide magazines and wireless remote control. This is available for group members to use. If you would like to borrow this item, please contact Ron Castleton on 01789 205878.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The China On-Liners

We are about to begin the course of 8 units covering the history of China from 1900 to the present day. This course entitled "China in Transition from Mao to Now" has been downloaded from the Australian U3A. If interested in seeing all the courses on offer from 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. We will also be learning basic Mandarin.

If interested in beginning this new venture, do join us on Tuesday afternoon, 26th March, from 2.30 to 4.30 in the annex.

For more information contact Robyn - redbird22@hotmail.co.uk . who will arrange for the first unit to be forwarded to you.

Robyn Nicoll

Art Appreciation Group



In February we went to the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery exhibition, *Revealed: Government Art Collection*. This featured about two hundred pieces chosen from UK government offices throughout the world. Since the nineteenth century, art has been acquired by our government for many reasons: to record and respect our history, to build cultural links, and to celebrate emerging trends in British art. This resulted in a unique collation of very diverse works, from sixteenth century artists to ultra-modern pieces in many formats.

On Friday March 15, we'll meet at 2.00 p.m. at 16 Fordham Avenue, S/A. We'll be sharing information on our own artistic items on the theme *Things Natural*. Please contact Sylvia (01789 263794) or Pam (01789 774712) for more information.

Pam Collins

All Swing and Jazz Group

Report of the January 2013 meeting.



The first meeting of 2013 started with a nostalgic return to 'The Jazz - Swinging 1960's'. With tracks ranging from 1960-1966 . We began with the Ted Heath and his Music playing "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" followed by a Chris Barber track with an unusual line up of Joe Herriot on Sax and Ian Wheeler on clarinet Then there was another Dennis 'special' next. Si Zentner playing "Paper Doll" BUT with the Johnny Mann Singers which you wouldn't automatically connect with jazz, but yes, it worked. We then had tracks from Bob Brookmeyer, Vic Dickenson' Octet, The Pete Smith Orchestra with a superb arrangement of "Maria" and Carmen McRae singing "Feeling Good". The first half finished with "A Little Bit of Blues" played by Joe Morello. After the usual coffee break we 'Revisited Old Favourites' and also 'Bands within the Bands and it was straight into "Ooo Wee" with Jerry Fielding and his Orchestra followed by "Frankie and Johnny" by the Kai Winding Septet, then onto the Benny Goodman Quartet, The Gramercy 5 and then we had two versions of "Miss Otis Regrets" the first with Ella Fitzgerald and the second an instrumental version with Pee Wee Hunt. Then Della Reese 'dished the dirt' whilst singing "The Lady is a Tramp". which was followed by a more 'refined' sound with Doris Rhodes singing "The Lorelei" with the Joe Sullivan Septet (the lyrics would belie the sound however). Then it was onto the Count Basie Octet with "One O'Clock Jump" and we finished on a rollicking note with Fiona Duncan with the Clyde Valley Stompers singing "Salty Dog". Thank you Dennis for giving us such a good range of vocal tracks (we all know '**your not one for vocals**'. A great foot tapping afternoon. Our next meeting will be at the usual venue of the Methodist Church Hall, Old Town on the 21st March 2013 starting at 2p.m.

Mavis Pickett

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



For February we are making a change and meeting on 25 February at the Oppo in Sheep Street, 12noon. So a new larger menu and no more fishcakes. Please let me know if you are coming or not.

Belinda Sylvester

The Choir



A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY – Our Summer Concert will be on Friday 28th June at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall. Our theme will be "The Musicals", so we are in for a treat! Tickets will be on sale from April. We enjoy our weekly practices; Stewart, our Musical Director, works very hard and inspires us to sing! I think we all go home uplifted.

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 underway. Beginners are receiving one to one help and Improvers have chosen topics or problems to be solved. eg address labels, on-line shopping, Powerpoint presentations, producing tables.

Dates in March: Thursday 14th 4pm – 6pm.

After the Easter break we meet again on Thursday 11th and 25th April

Please contact Ron or Robyn for further information or to join a group for specific help.

Robyn Nicoll

Creative Craft Group



A varied programme has been planned for the coming year including a beading workshop when a tutor will bring all the necessary beads and accessories, and a china painting afternoon, also with a tutor. We are looking forward to seeing an exquisite display of quilts and quilting techniques by Jane Sully on Thursday 18th April. Anyone is welcome to come along to these special afternoons. The dates and details will be advertised in future newsletters. At our

February meeting, we made mini boxes using templates, thin decorative card and papers.

Date for March: Thursday 21st, 2pm – 4pm in the annex – we will be planning a patchwork project.

Roma Rudd.

Card Making Group



Our work-shop last week was a great success. 10 members enjoyed making cards for men using new techniques. £50 has been sent to Nuneaton Dog Refuge and now we shall be collecting for Avon Cat Rescue. A big than-you must go to all our customers at the monthly meeting for their support. If

anyone would like to name the next local charity for a donation please let me know. The next meeting will be on March 22nd. All new members welcome, contact me for details. Carolyn Leach 01789 266194

Carolyn Leach

Dinahs



Dinahs met in The Encore on the 5th February. It was lovely to see everyone. We had a room to ourselves, it got rather noisy! However we were on our own. The service was slow but the conversation was not. Charities, The Food Bank, starving people, horse meat in the food chain were discussed. It is hard to believe that there are people hungry today when we are shown all the waste food in supermarkets; but because of Health and Safety..... How did we all manage growing up, there was no 'Best Before' date on the food our mothers bought at the Coop!! The Wonders of Life, Brian Cox, and David Attenborough's Africa programmes on television are much enjoyed. Also, a lovely place to live is: Poole Harbour, Sand Banks..... We next meet on Tuesday 5th March, venue to be decided.

Sylvia Crooks.

Discussion Group



Our topic for February 13 was "When is a traitor not a traitor?" This led to much talk about how difficult it must have been for our Royal Family with their German connections before & during WW2. A great many negotiations went on between GB & Germany in attempt to avert war. We also discussed a number of other notorious traitors. Our next meeting will be March 13 at the Windmill.

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



There is no meeting in March due to Easter holidays, but you are welcome to attend on 14 March when the computer group will be meeting if you wish to.

Sue Ocock

French Conversation – New Group

Our French lady is looking forward to joining us & I am now trying to co-ordinate times & venues.

Athena Roderick

Grumpy Old Men Group



In a spirited introduction to this month's topic "Is the Honours system fit for purpose", our Grump of the Month, Geoff. Bridgewater, was adamant that it was not - "no, no, thrice times no" - and really never has been. He maintained that it has become a vehicle for the glorification of so called celebrities and people in public life and business who, anyhow, were only doing things which were part of their normal jobs. He acknowledged that there were many people whose contributions to society warranted recognition but the current system did not give them the prominence they deserved. The theme of Geoff.'s remarks were echoed by, and enlarged upon, by subsequent speakers questioning the validity of honours bestowed on various individuals and inevitably "cash for honours" got a mention. It was pointed out, however, that many of the rewards were given for very commendable services to charities, although it was suspected that some donations were for tax considerations rather than purely altruistic reasons. The general consensus of the gathering was that a new system was required although there was no agreement on how it should be achieved.

Next Meeting - Wed. 20th March Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre

Subject - What benefits have we got from our "special relationship" with the U.S.A. Introduced by Elliot Cave.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



This month I am very pleased to report that we have had four new members – Jennifer, Florence, Corinne and Heather joined us for the last two practice sessions. This makes our numbers up to 10 members – SO ONLY 6 MORE TO GO!!! Having these new members has made such a difference, we can now progress to better things, as the new members took to the ringing very quickly.

Unfortunately I was unable to get to the last meeting on the 11th February, but I am glad to report that Chris Heaps filled the gap very ably. If you can read music, we would be very pleased to welcome you to our group – contact Ron Castleton on 10789 205878 or ron.castleton@tiscali.co.uk.

Ron Castleton

History Group



In February Jennifer Stone spoke to us about “Women in the Theatre”. She is an actress who has run her own theatre company and is currently Manager of the “Shakespeare Aloud” project at Shakespeare's Birthplace, which entertains visitors to the Birthplace by performing extracts from his plays and poems. Most frequently requested? - Romeo and Juliet.

In Shakespeare's time women's parts were played by young boys, but in 1660 it is recorded that an actress named Margaret Hughes played Desdemona in Othello. Charles II declared that all women's parts should be played by women – his mistress, Nell Gwynn, had joined an acting school at the age of 14. In Restoration Comedy women were somewhat bawdy but, by the end of the 17th Century, women were being taken more seriously (Garrick made dramatic art respectable) and in the 18th Century there were women playwrights. Sarah Siddons and Ellen Terry were highly regarded and apparently Queen Victoria was a great fan of the theatre. Nowadays, women are producers, costume designers, managers and directors.

On Monday 11th March Beryl Escott is talking to us about “Women in the SOE” (NB: men are very welcome at our meetings).

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

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



We did not manage to get together in January because of the snow. We met at Gwymeth's on the 21st February. It was nice to meet up again to read more of “Hobson's Choice” by Harold Brighouse. We read Act II and Act III and will finish next month when we meet on Thursday 28th

March, at 10.30 at Gwyneth's.

If you would like to join us please ring Sylvia on 01789 416965.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry and Prose



There was no meeting in February. Our next meeting is Wednesday 13th March at 2.00pm.

Anne Davies

Reading Group – Monday



This month we had a fantastic read..lots to discuss and thoroughly enjoyed by us all. It is called Lyrics Alley by Leila Aboulela. Other groups should request it . It would make an excellent film! Our Jan. book was less of a success. Half the group read it but none would recommend it..much patience needed to get to the point!..a murder! The whaleboat house was the title. This month is 'The sense of an Ending,' 2011 Booker prize..something to get our teeth into! As usual the meeting was lively and the cake delicious

Phyllis Bailey

Reading Group – Wednesday



Last month we read “The War of Troy” by Lindsay Clarke. This was a retelling of the ancient story and its aftermath. Our group were divided, those who read the novel and those who didn't get past the first few chapters. However, we were inspired by those members who read the book as they enjoyed it so much that we all intend to go back and read the novel. Our novel this month is “March” by Geraldine Brooks.

Dorothy Jones

Reading Group – Friday



We read “The News From Where You Are” by Catherine O'Flynn and it is very difficult to find anything positive to say about it. It was a quick and easy read with no plot, boring characters and it rambled over places, times and events so there was no shape to the novel either. Not to be recommended.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



We met in the Annexe so we could have the music as loud as we liked. The programme followed the usual line of picking artists from all eras or rock and roll with some people we know and some new ones who provoked some interesting discussions.

Coral Bradley

Science and Nature Group



On 8th February we watched a DVD called Metal - How It Works. It was presented by Mark Miodownik. He explained how metal had shaped our world. From Man stepping out of the Stone age to discover and produce iron to achieving the ability to produce a metal that has its own memory. It was a fascinating and enlightening DVD that we all enjoyed.

Next meetings:

March 8th Talk on " The history of the Stratford Canal" by Clive Henderson

April 12th " Stratford's Building Stones " " A talk whilst you walk " with Hugh Jones from the Warwickshire Geological Trust around town.

SPANISH.

Several members have expressed an interest in learning basic Spanish. Do we have anyone within our Heart of England Group who is able to lead this group? Contact Dorothy Jones 01789 204892 (Muchas Gracias)

Sunday Lunch Group



The April lunch will be on the 5th April at Stratford Golf Club. This will be a 3 course lunch at £15 per head. Names please to Brian Bradley: 01789 488551

Brian Bradley

Theatre Group.



On 30th March we go to Malvern to see "The Pitmen Painters". All the tickets for this performance have been sold and we have a waiting list. Everyone has paid. Thank you. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and Stratford Leisure Centre at 12.30. I will be away and so Rosemary Davies will be your contact. Her telephone number is 01789 294862.

Back to Malvern on 18th May 2013 to see "The Woman in Black". Leaving at the usual times – 12.00 from Henley and 12.30 from Stratford Leisure Centre. The cost of this trip is £31.00. We have a lot of names already so make sure you get your name down if you are interested.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



The walk in February was cancelled due to continuing bad weather. The next walk will be on **Wednesday 13th March 2013 at 10.00 a.m.** and will start from the Bridge Free Car park in Shipston-on-Stour (by the river). This is a five mile walk on good surface for winter months. I recommend good walking shoes and that you also bring a drink with you, as there is nothing on the way. Allow three hours plus traveling time. There are plenty of cafes in Shipston if you want a coffee or snack after the walk. Look forward to seeing you.

Valerie Redfern

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERT

THURSDAY 9th May 2.15pm - Think of "dances in the sunlight" - sun kissed, glorious celebrations of Italy! Our next concert will be **Viva Italia** - Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Strauss. I am now taking names and money for this concert; we have to pay for the tickets two months in advance.

The cost of this visit is £26. This includes the concert ticket and return coach to the Birmingham Symphony Hall. The coach will leave 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

WHAT'S ON IN U3A LOCALLY

Dene Valley	12 th March	"The Wonder of the Waterways"	Roger Butler
Shotton	2 nd April	"A Dog's Life as a Member of the RSC"	Anne Hepworth
Stratford	27 th March	Annual General Meeting	

The closing date for material for the April 2013 Newsletter is Sunday 24th March.

Group	Group Leader	Contact Telephone	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)
All Swing and Jazz	Dennis Sully		4 th Thursday 2 - 4pm
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins		3 rd Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Tony Badham		4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm
Bridge	John Yeomans		Every Tuesday 2.30pmCard
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		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	Athena Roderick		2 nd Wednesday
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock		4 th Thursday – 4.00 pm
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	Ann McNeill		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 Appreciation	Anne Davies		As appropriate
Reading – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones		3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm
Reading – Monday	Phyllis Bailey		3 rd Monday–2.30-4.30pm
Reading – Friday	Coral Bradley		As appropriate
Rock & Roll Music	Coral Bradley		2 nd Thursday – 2 – 4pm
Science & Nature (incorporating Bird Watching)	Geoff Bridgewater		2 nd Fridays 2 - 4pm (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. 2013

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>GROUP</u>
		JULY	Keep Fit Group
		AUGUST	Bridge Group
MARCH	Bird Watching 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