



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

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Heart of England

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May 2013 Newsletter

TODAY'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 those 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."

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for June will be Mhairi Peters and she will talk about Upton House. "Upton House in the 1930s. What did Lord Bearsted hide under his bed? What spending did Lady Bearsted hide from her husband? And what did the Butler see in the greenhouses? Find out the answers and hear more about life at Upton House in the 1930s!

Letter of Thanks

Athena has received a letter of thanks from the Baldwin Boat Trust. In March Anne Halsey gave us a talk about the Trust and we donated £40 to the Trust.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

David Sladden

Welcome to our May meeting and let's hope this month will bring some better weather.

By the date of this meeting building work should have started and although attempts will be made to minimise disruption there may still be some. Hopefully it will not affect our meeting too much.

I updated the circulation list for "Third Age Matters" and hope you received April's issue but please let me know if you did not.

SUMMER OUTING

Notice by Coral Bradley

FRIDAY 27 JULY 2013

LAYCOCK ABBEY, WILTSHIRE

Leaving Henley at 8.30 and the Leisure Centre at 9.00am. Returning at approximately 7.30pm.

Cost £14.00 for members of the National Trust.

£23.10 for non members of the National Trust.

Put your name down now to avoid disappointment.

COURSES ON-LINE FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

Report by Robyn Nicoll



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.

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

Community Course by Warwick University

"Early Renaissance Italy". 8 week course 6.00 – 8.00pm, Tuesdays 7th May - 25th June. The Lounge, Stratford Methodist Church. Free taster session on 7th May. Pre-register by 29th April j.Brown.5@warwick.ac.uk. Cost for 8 week course is £90. More information at:

<http://www2.Warwick.ac.uk/fac.arts/italian/staff/lines/stratford>

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The China On-Liners

Report by Robyn Nicoll

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 meet for our discussion of Unit 3 just after this meeting so the date for our next get-together will be advertised in the June newsletter. For more information contact Robyn - redbird22@hotmail.co.uk . who will arrange for the units to be forwarded to you.

Art Appreciation Group

Report by Sylvia Kentish



Our April visit was to Compton Verney to see the exhibition "500 Years of Italian Art" - a very enjoyable visit. Lunch was booked for 13 members. On May 17th we will be at Phyl's house to watch a DVD "Cezanne Three Colors". For more information contact Sylvia Kentish (01789 263794)

All Swing and Jazz Group

Report by Mavis Pickett

Report of March 2013 meeting



Our March programme was presented by Mary Fishleigh, and her starting point was 'The 25 Best Jazz Film Scores chosen by Ehsan Khoshbakht'. Mary chose one track from Each score and to help us with the background of each track she gave us notes on the relevant films. In the traditional 'countdown' manner she played her choices in reverse order, so the first one we listened to was No.25 which was from the film 'Anatomy Of Murder'. The entire score was composed by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. This was followed by "Orson Around" from 'A Touch of Evil', composed by Henry Mancini, and then a Quincy Jones composition for the film 'In Cold Blood'. What was noticeable was the number of famous Jazz/Swing names that were mentioned. We had Chico Hamilton, Stan Getz, Thelonious Monk, Benny Goodman and Kenny Clark to name just a few. The arrangements were very different from the tracks we usually listen to because they were composed and arranged to enhance the scenes and atmosphere in the films they were in. The second half ranged from track 12 The Philip Green Orchestra playing "Muy Rapido" from The film 'All Night Long' followed by Louis Armstrong playing "A Song is Born" from the film Of the same name and then onwards through tracks 10 and 9 to number 8 – The Benny Goodman Orchestra with "It's been So Long". We were then on the countdown to the top three tracks suggested by Mr Khoshbakht and these were Sonny Rollins playing "Alfie's Theme Differently" from the film Alfie. John Lewis playing "Skating in Central Park" from 'Odds Against Tomorrow' And finally in number one spot Miles Davis with "Au bar du petit bac" from 'Ascenseur pour L'échafaud. It's interesting to note that the more conventional tracks were in the top placed area of the chart. Our thanks to Mary for the amount of work she put into her programme. Our next meeting will be at the usual venue of the Methodist Church Hall on the 25th May starting as usual at 2p.m.

Bridge Group

Notice by 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.

The Choir

Report by Dorothy Jones



We continue to work hard with our new repertoire from the Musicals. Stewart seems to give us a new challenge every week. We look forward to our concert on Friday 28th June 2-30_4-pm at the Methodist Church Hall. Tickets £3 on sale at the main meeting or phone Dorothy Jones 01789 204892 to reserve . If you find you cannot make that date we will be repeating the programme the following Friday July 5th at Briarscroft.

Classical Music Group

Report by Aline Cummings



Some interest has been shown in starting this up again. I will put out a list at the main meeting in May for people to sign up, say which day would suit and what form it should take. If you will not be there please phone (01789 298 357) or email me cumming_aline@btinternet.com instead. If numbers are small (10 or less) we can meet in a house (I will offer mine). The form could be musical appreciation, i.e. listen to CDs, or more talk about a topic (history of music, development, Howard Goodall's programmes) or suggestions that people want.

Computer Group at Stratford School.

Report by Robyn Nicoll



The courses for Beginners and Improvers concluded at the end of April.

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.) Beginners will receive one to one help and Improvers may choose topics or problems to be solved. eg address labels, shopping on-line, power point presentation, producing tables, digital camera skills, internet research. The cost of these 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)

It is with sadness that I have to report the death of Florence Edgar after a short illness. Florence has been a member of Heart of England U3A for many years and has been one of our willing helpers at the Computer Group and will be remembered by many of the beginners for her patience and teaching skills. Florence will be greatly missed by us all.

Creative Craft Group

Report by Roma Rudd.



Our meeting this month was well attended. We were delighted to welcome Jane Sully who brought some of her beautiful Patchwork, and quilted work to show us. Jane talked us through each project from her earliest to her latest pieces. The work, love and dedication Jane had put into her work was phenomenal and a joy to see. We would like to convey our Thanks to Jane through her husband Dennis Sully for the time and effort she put into giving us this display.

Our next meeting will be on May 16th 2-4pm. At the moment the venue for our next meeting is in abeyance but I will inform everyone nearer the time where we will be meeting. The project will be a sewing workshop-----Making fabric bags under the guidance of Barbara Cooper from (Transition Stratford.) We aim to make a number of these bags and they will be given away at the River Festival on the 6/7th July. If you would like to come along and give us a hand please phone Roma on 01789 262690.

Dinahs

Report by Sylvia Crooks.



We met on the 2nd April at the Red Lion again. Food at a reasonable price and an oval table that seats 10. We had a new friendly face join us, Rosemary Davies. Aline also joined us which was lovely; during the meal we found out it was her Birthday: we were so please she chose to have lunch with us. We chatted about economic meals, also “can you live on £58 a week”? Welfare, system and children today. Transition Stratford would like assistance to make 1,000,000 bags made from strong cotton, old curtains etc; any material you could see strong enough to make shopping bags. The idea is to give them out at the Stratford Food Festival in June, instead of plastic bags. Making a statement against the use of plastic bags: which are a menace to the environment. A food for thought!! One of us did make a statement that the ‘muscular structure somewhat diminished in the young men of today’!!

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

Discussion Group

Report by Sue Tringham



Did the Americans land on the moon and can we believe everything we read in the newspapers? Of course they landed on the moon. Russians put about it was a big con. A discussion on the Kennedy's followed. This led onto our Queen. How amazing she is with weekly meeting with her Ministers and how well Helen Mirren played her in the film. The Huhnes were topical and it was clear that once Huhne had lied about who was driving there was no going back. Wife a tough cookie! Discussion on Jury Service, availability of guns in the USA, Asian couple with jewellery shop and smoke camera, would the next Pope be black or Canadian, ballroom dancing, royal family, finishing with a short discussion on the Falklands – all in the space of two hours!

April 10. High Tech Home Care was our theme. The topic came from an article in Saga Magazine. We all felt that we would like our dependents & ourselves to be cared for in our own homes as independence is important. Also, the horror stories coming out of hospitals & Care Homes are terrifying. But we also appreciate that, if we stay at home, probably a family member will carry the burden of care & this is very often unfair. The High Tech idea offers an alarm system, which goes through to professional carers & family members. It is said to be unobtrusive, but we did feel that there was a slight touch of Big Brother. However, Athena feels that it has enormous possibilities.

Family History Group

Report by Sue Ocock

→ The next meeting will be Thursday 23rd May when the computer group will be meeting. Meet at Stratford High School 3.45 for 4.00pm.



Film Group

Report by Mary Fishleigh

At the first meeting of the Film Group we watched the 1951 film of “The Browning Version”, directed by Anthony Asquith and starring Nigel Patrick and Michael Redgrave. This generated a lot of discussion afterwards about late '40s teaching methods and film making techniques.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 21st May at 2pm in the Lounge of the Methodist Church Hall.

French Conversation

Report by Athena Roderick

We held our first meeting over coffee in The Shakespeare and met our French speaking lady. We have agreed to meet monthly, on Tuesdays, taking it in turns to host the meeting in our own homes. Geoff “Ponreau” will be our first host on May 21st at 11.00am.

Garden History Group

Report by Katharine Stuart



The Garden History Group met last week to look at the Dutch influence on gardening during the reign of William and Mary. We are making substantial progress, the internet offering a wide range of additional information for those of us wishing to pursue topics further. Our next meeting is at the end of May when we shall be discussing gardening in ther Geogian period. Members with a particular interest in this period are welcome to join us. For further information please email:

katharine.stuart@gmail.com

Grumpy Old Men Group

Report by Graham Mitchell



A recent BBC survey concluded that the traditional social divisions of working, middle and upper class were out of date in the 21st Century as they no longer reflected modern occupations or lifestyles and should be expanded to seven classifications instead. At their April lunchtime meeting, led by Graham Mitchell, (Grump of the Month), the Grumps examined the validity which was based on personal economic, social and cultural factors. The unanimous verdict was that it was a flawed piece of research as for instance it failed to take into account the strongest influence on status and future prospects, namely background (birth, upbringing, education, parents jobs etc., etc.,). What is the point of the survey, of what practical use is it and, in particular, is this the sort of activity in which the British Broadcasting Corporation should be involved and the way the licence fee should be used?? "What a load of rubbish" was the consensus of the Group - appropriately summarized in one word - BUNKUM!!

Next meeting - Wed. 15th May Venue - Le Bistrot Pierre.

Subject – Who would you like to be if not yourself? Introduction - ALL

Hand Bell Ringing

Report by Ron Castleton



We are continuing to make progress, which is much improved by the addition of the new ringers.

We still have room for more ringers. Our Next meeting is on Monday 13th May.

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

History Group

Report by Sheela Burchill



At our April meeting Joy Leslie Gibson spoke to us about "The Life of the Medieval Woman". She quoted from the letters of Margaret Paston, a member of the Paston family who lived in the village of Paston in Norfolk and whose letters and papers throw a vivid light on domestic life in the 15th century. They were first published in the late 18th century and early 19th centuries. Joy then told us about the authoress Juliana of Norwich (named after her church – her real name is not known) who wrote "Revelations of Divine Love" and who spent her life in prayer and meditation, although she apparently acted as a kind of agony aunt to the local people. Joy's third subject was Margery Kempe (born 1364) who was the daughter of a mayor of King's Lynn, wife of a burgess and mother of 14 children. "The Book of Margery Kempe" (written down at her dictation – she neither write nor read) is the first autobiographical confession of its kind in English. In her personal experience of religious ecstasy she was so full of tears and outcries that she seems to have become a bit of a bore, but she confessed her bodily and spiritual difficulties with complete frankness and described in entertaining detail her journeys to the Holy Land and to Germany. An enlightening afternoon.

At our next meeting on Monday 13th May we are going to see the film "Brassed Off". Made in the 1990s it tells us about a Northern Brass Band. (Sylia tells us she was an extra in the film so we're hoping we shall spot her.

Keep Fit Group

Notice by Mary Palmer



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.

Opera Group

Report by Alan Howland



We met at Pam and Alan's house on 27th March when we saw a filmed version of Mozart's "The Magic Flute", directed by Kenneth Branagh, with a new English libretto adapted by Stephen Fry. In Mozart's original, a young prince has to undergo initiation rites to prepare him for his future tasks. This version is set in the trenches of World War I with the leading character, Tamino, as a young officer preparing for the rigours of the war. He is struck by a gas grenade blast and when he recovers he is helped by Three Ladies (servants of The Queen of the Night). He meets Papageno, (a bird

catcher longing for his own bird girl), who uses birds to detect gas in the trenches. He is shown a picture of a young girl and immediately falls in love with her. He discovers that she is Pamina, daughter of the Queen of the Night. She has been imprisoned by Sarastro, The High Priest of The Temple of Light, and the Queen has instructed Tamino to rescue her daughter. He is given a magic flute, to help overcome difficulties, and Papageno is given a set of magic chimes, as they both undertake the task together. Sarastro will not release Pamina but insists they must undergo three trials of character, promising that if successful, Tamino shall have Pamina's hand. The first trial is silence, which causes problems when Pamina enters and Tamino has to ignore her, to her great dismay. The second is fire, which sees them at war, and the third is water in a flooded trench. They successfully complete these tasks, and Tamino and Pamina are united. Papageno is also rewarded with his love, Papagena, and they set up their own love nest, as all rejoice in the success of light over darkness and peace over war. Mozart's opera makes clear references to Freemasonry and its rituals, and these are also clear here. In Mozart's time Freemasonry was banned in some places by Hapsburg Empress, Maria Theresa, and it is said that the Queen of the Night is a caricature of her. No meetings are planned for April or May due to holidays, but provisionally we will meet again at Pam and Alan's on 26th June.

Pilates Group



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

Play Reading Group



We met at Gwyneth's Thursday 18th April. Where we finished reading 'Hobsons Choice' by Harold Brighouse. Very funny, we hope to get the movie with Charles Laughton; a few of us have not

seen it. We had to cancel last month because of illness. Next meeting will be Thursday 16th May.

If you would like to join us please ring Sylvia on 01789 416789.

Report by Sylvia Crooks

Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we held our meeting at Pierre Bistro and enjoyed a super lunch. We spoke briefly about our novel Cranford by Elizabeth Gaskell. Cranford is a village set in Cheshire, where "women rule and men tend to get in the way" Their days revolved around card games, tea, thriftiness, friendship and an endless appetite for scandal. Not at all like our lives today! We all

agreed it was an enjoyable read.

Report by Dorothy Jones

Reading Group – Friday



We read "The Man of Passage" by Ian Mathie. This is a collection of short stories written by a man who spent most of his working life in Africa working with remote tribes to help with their supply of clean water. He met many interesting people along the way and this book is a sample of some of them. It is an interesting book and gave us plenty of things to talk about.

Report by Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



This month Colin Taylor from Alcester U3A gave us an interesting talk about Larry Parnes and the singers he promoted in the 1950s and the 1960s. He also included some new and old songs which we all enjoyed. Thank you Colin.

Report by Coral Bradley

Science and Nature Group



25 members of the group gathered in the Holy Trinity Churchyard for a walk around Stratford looking at buildings and building materials, notably stone. Our guide was Hugh Jones from Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group. He gave a very interesting talk as we walked, pausing by each building or feature to explain. Buildings visited included Holy trinity Church,

Report by Edwin Lilly

which has a wonderful variety of stone in its makeup, The Summer House (Brass Rubbing Centre) in the Theatre Gardens, Clopton Bridge, which is over 500 years old, The Town Hall, The Guild Chapel. All have been built using Wawrickshire stone from various sources and include sandstones and limestones. The next event is a visit to London Museums (Science Museum particularly but others are available) on Tuesday 14th May, followed by a prestigious talk on Gblal Warming on Tuesday 18th June.

Spanish Conversation

Report by Dorothy Jones

If you expressed an interest in this group will you please have a word with me at the main meeting or phone 01789 204892 for more information. I think we have found one of our new members who is willing to teach us!

Sunday Lunch Group

Notice by Brian Bradley



The next Sunday Lunch is on 5th May at Le Bistrot Pierre, Swans Nest, Stratford. The June lunch will be on Sunday 2nd June at the King's Court Hotel, Alcester. Names please to Brian Bradley: 01789 488551

Theatre Group.

Notice by Coral Bradley



We will go to Malvern Theatre on 18th May 2013 to see "The Woman in Black" by Susan Hill. Leaving at the usual times – 12.00 from Henley and 12.30 from Stratford Leisure Centre. My mobile phone for that day will 07818 820207.

Walking Group

Notice by Valerie Redfern



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 8th May 2013 at 10.00 a.m. and start from the Gower memorial in Bancroft Gardens. The walk is along the canal towards Wilmcote there is ongoing work on the towpath but it was a very interesting and enjoyable walk.

I recommend good walking shoes and that you bring a drink with you as there is nothing on the way. We will be parking in the recreation ground as usual or you can use park and ride.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERT

THURSDAY 9th May 2.15pm

Notice by Dorothy Jones

Thanks to everyone who has paid for the concert on May 9th. The coach will leave the Johnsons' depot at 12noon and the Stratford Leisure Centre at 12-30pm. At the moment I have one ticket left. Dorothy Jones on 01789 204892.

WHAT'S ON IN U3A LOCALLY

Warwick: 31st May Talk on Dementia by Dr David Llewellyn, the country's foremost expert. There are still some tickets available at £2 each. Start at 2.00pm. Telephone Athena on 01789 551416 for more information.

Stratford: 29th May – "My Life in the Theatre" - Jeffery Dench.

Shotton: 7th May - "Whistling aound the World" - Simon Topman.

Dene Valley: 14th May – "To the Fringe and Beyond" - Ginny Davis.

The closing date for material for the June 2013 Newsletter is Sunday 26th May.

Group	Group Leader	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 2.30pm
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	
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
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett	2 nd Tuesday – 2.00pm
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 Appreciation	Anne Davies	As appropriate
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 (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

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