

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

Heart of England

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May 2016 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

Our Speaker for May will be Brenda Middleton, whose topic will be Peter Ustinov; a tribute to a much loved personality.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER

Our speaker for June is Rod Pomery. His talk will be "A Brief History of the Bow", with examples from around the world including Europe, Middle East, Asia Japan and the New World. It covers the bow in hunting, war, as a pastime, sport and even spiritual aid.

CHAIRMAN'S MAY JOTTINGS

Geoff Bridgewater

Hello everyone and a very warm welcome to our May monthly meeting.

Last month's trial of reserving some seating at or near the front of the hall for those of you with hearing or sight difficulties seemed to be welcomed. A member of the committee will be standing near the reception desk to assist should you need help. Please ask.

As our AGM is getting closer I am keen to encourage more of you to be nominated to join our committee next year. If you are interested, come and have a chat.

Our town was 'buzzing' on Shakespear's 400th Anniversary weekend. We met lovely visitors from all over the World and the whole atmosphere was fantastic. 'Fun and Friendship' went global!

WEST MIDLANDS INTEREST GROUPS WORKSHOP

Organised by the U3A West Midlands Trustee Tony Randall. Tuesday 24th May 2016 Carr's Lane Church Centre, Birmingham. The church is 5 minutes walk from Moor Street Station and the bus stop. 10.30 to 4pm. free lunch. For all members, interested about running an Interest Group. To register email Tony aprandall@btinternet.com

CHANGE OF SPEAKER

Our speaker for December 2017 was to have been Gerald Lesinski, Master of Lord Leycester Hospital in Warwick. Unfortunately The Master had a bad fall last year and has found it necessary to curtail his activities and is retiring shortly. So we will not be able to enjoy another of his talks. I know that our members will be sorry to hear this and I have sent our regrets and best wishes to him.

COURSES ON-LINE-FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

Robyn Nícoll



There is a vast list of courses available which may be found on the National U3A Web site. For a detailed list, you will need to access the Members' Area by creating a user name and password. **National Web site:** www.u3a.org.uk

The Australia U3A offer a large selection of topics which may be studied individually or in a small group as we have done previously but with an annual charge to sign up. (For an individual - \$25; For

an Organisation - \$15.)

The topics include: World Affairs and History - 10 courses; Nature - 5 courses; Writing and Creativity - 12 courses; Lifestyle - 11 courses; Science - 11 courses. (See the notice board for a detailed list)

NB The original 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 has recently been completed and a second Garden History Course has been arranged.

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

[NB: Do look at the National Web site to see all the opportunities and information available to U3A members.]

THE CHINA DISCUSSION GROUP

At our get-together at the end of April, members had chosen a province of China to research and presented their findings, taking advantage of the monitor to show photographs.

Next meeting: Date and topic to be arranged.

Our get-togethers are informal and varied consisting of a short language/practical session led by Patricia Wy, followed by discussion of the chosen topic often accompanied by a photo presentation and concluding with "what the papers say". 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

The word Fiendish isn't an adjective I would normally use in day to day conversation but it loomed large and in CAPITALS in the March programme. Group member Barrie Burleton was the compiler and presenter. He presented us each with the usual programme sheet but with a difference. For each track we were given a cryptic clue and a track was played, we then had to match up the track and the Artist/

s...it was not easy. There were some standards (but not necessarily with the usual players) some obtuse ones and some 'tip of the tongue' ones.. At the end we added up our scores which ranged from single figures up to a full house from one member. It was a great afternoon with lots of laughter and banter and of course a full 24 tracks of music. Our big thanks go out to Barrie who must have put in such a lot of work, we all loved it. Some words that could be used as similes under the word Fiendish are 'knotty, thorny, ticklish, obtuse and even unfathomable. All of which applied to the programme. Oh and yes, we did manage to fit in our usual half time coffee break. Thank you again Barrie. All are welcome to come and join us, we meet on the <u>4th</u> Thursday of the month in the lounge of the Methodist Church Hall in Old Town, Starting at 2pm.

ART APPRECIATION

Sylvía Kentísh /Pam Collíns



In April, we celebrated Shakespeare's 400th anniversary by going to Compton Verney where we saw two related exhibitions: *Boydell's Vision: the Shakespeare Gallery in the 18th Century* and *Shakespeare in Art: Tempests, Tyrants and Tragedy.* We learnt how Boydell's gallery, with its commissioned paintings that were reproduced as popular etchings, contributed to Shakespeare's popularity in the eighteenth centu-

ry. *Shakespeare in Art* showed items relating to selected Shakespeare plays from several different sources. This part was also of interest because it was staged, in collaboration with the RSC design team, in ways that gave it a theatrical presentation and a 'stage set' ambience.

Mavís Píckett

Robyn Nícoll

At next month's meeting we'll be learning more about one of the lesser-known impressionists: Gustave Caillebotte.

BRIDGE GROUP

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

Our next workshop will be on May 27th , 12.30–4.30. If anyone has a local charity to whom we could donate our next £50 from our sales please let me know.

CHINWAGS

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

THE CHOIR

We are looking forward to our concert on May 6th, 2-30pm at the Methodist Church Hall. We have a few tickets left on sale at the main meeting.

If you are unable to to come on May 6th you will be very welcome at Briarcroft residential apartments, Alcester Rd on May 13th at 2-30pm, when we will be performing again for the residents.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

At the April meeting we heard a selection drawn from the Valma Rose (a former member) gift to U3A. We began with Vaughan Williams, the Intrada from his Concerto Grosso then the Overture to The Wasps, incidental Music for the play by Aristophanes. Next Schubert, Gute Nacht from the Winterreise song cycle sung by Brigitte Fassbaender, gloomy but a beautiful voice. The second of Mozart's four Horn

Concertos, all three movements, was played by Gerd Seifert and Berlin Phiharmonic conducter von Karajan. Finally Ravel's Rapsodie Espagnole, Feria, the festival finale.

After tea, two of the Pictures at an Exhibition composed by Mussorski for the piano, here in a version orchestrated by Ravel, Promenade and the Great Gate of Kiev. Next rather an oddity, Nigel Kennedy set Kafka's poetry to music in his own style. Melody in the Wind: Kennedy playing with Stephane Grappelli (jazz violinist) and eight assorted instruments. There were some delightful moments. We finished with Elgar's Serenade for Strings, composed early in his career but recognisable.

In May we meet on the third Monday, 16th., at Bridge Cottage 2.00pm as before.

COMPUTER GROUP

A course of 5 sessions has been arranged at the Parish Centre, 2.30 - 4.00pm beginning in May and concluding in July. (2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons)

This course will cover topics for tablets and laptops and will offer help to members who wish to upgrade their computers to the free Windows10 operating system. (free until 23rd July)

The dates booked: May 11th. and 25th. June 8th and 22nd. July 13th.

All spaces have been filled.

The cost for the 5 sessions will be £7 which will cover the cost of hiring the hall. Members are required to pay for the course in advance and may do so at the monthly meeting or by post to Robyn Nicoll, 165 Banbury Road, CV37 7HT. (please make cheques payable to "Heart of England U3A")

More experienced members give their time to help the "students" and this has been greatly appreciated. If you are able to offer some time and expertise please let Robyn know. redbird22@hotmail.co.uk





Aline Cumming

Robyn Nícoll

Carolyn Leach

Belínda Sylvestor

Dorothy Jones



CREATIVE CRAFTS GROUP

Robyn Nícoll Trícia Callaghan



The April workshop was led by Carolyn, assisted by Jayne. Members were shown how to make flowers from wide, wired ribbon using needle and thread. The Ribbon theme extends to our May meeting. Kits of metallic ribbon have been purchased with instructions enclosed and members will be making bows, tiny butterflies and small flowers.

Date for the diary: Thursday, 19th May, 2pm to 4pm in the New Room.

We welcome new members so do come along. For more information, please contact Tricia.

DINAHS

Sylvía Crooks

Wow! It is a month already. We met at the Red Lion on the 5th April. A lovely welcome from the Staff as usual. We had invited Aline to come along and have lunch with us, and talk about her recent visit to New Zealand. She has had a great second visit with family who settled out there a number of years ago. Also we chatted about Premium Bonds, moving banks (do not be afraid to do so if necessary) Travel

insurance : who to go with, Age Concern – Staysure maybe.

Godspell was said to be worth a visit. The Buzz Café that was, is now the 'Boston Tea Party' well worth a visit for a pot of tea and cake!! A remark by a few : During the Easter break they had noticed in cafés, 'badly behaved children!! Could be our age? Or maybe not.

We will next get together on Tuesday 3rd May at the Red Lion 12.15.

DISCUSSION GROUP

As we had a new member who has spent time in Europe & also who has experience as a Lib Dem activist, we listened to her views on The Referendum. She is in no doubt that we gain a great deal from being in Europe, because free movement for work & holidays might not be so easy. Working rights have improved & these might be scrapped. She also felt that the leaders in Europe are pretty accountable, although no politicians are perfect. We found her views very interesting, but there is still too much

emotion on both sides for most of us to be happy about making a decision.

FILM GROUP

Mary Físhleigh

Athena Roderick



At our April meeting we continued our short season of films with connections to Shakespeare's plays. This month it was the 1996 production of Romeo and Juliet directed by Baz Luhman and starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. This was an unconventional adaptation of the play set in the futuristic urban backdrop of Verona Beach. Shakespeare's original dialogue was kept, but spoken in an American accent and often very fast made it a bit more of a challenge than usual. The interpretation worked well

and had us all watching very carefully to see the many references and quotes on billboards, advertisements and magazines from other Shakespeare plays.

Next month we will continue our collection of Shakespeare films with a twist.

Our aim for the group 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. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Mary or Mavis.

Our next meeting will be on May 10th at 2pm in the Lounge at the Methodist Church.

GAMES GROUP—SCRABBLE, DOMINOES AND CARDS

Sue Tríngham

Jayne Jones



In April there were nine of us with a 'newby' on the Scrabble table who did really well! Edwin is a great helper. Our meetings in May will be from 2pm – 4pm on Monday 9th and Monday 16th. I will not be here for either session but have delegated things to Heather. Thanks Heather! We contribute £2 for our pay and play sessions which include tea/coffee and biscuits! We welcome new members so just

turn up.

GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP

April saw the group take a walk to see the bluebells at Austy woods. We set off from the tea rooms at Yew Tree Farm, Wootton Wawen, after a catchup over coffee & cake. It was a pretty walk, although very muddy indeed in some places, and we were rewarded with a lovely display of bluebells in the

woods.

Our next outing is on Tuesday 10 May when we are visiting The National Herb Centre, Warmington, Banbury. Please contact Suzy Genge (suzygenge@yahoo.co.uk) for more details.

Our programme for the year can be found on the Chairman's information board.

GRUMPY OLD MEN GROUP

Graham Mítchell



Strangely the discussion topic of the April gathering, attended by 17 Grumps, did not fill the members with much enthusiasm. Although topical in view of the Queen's birthday next day, the Group seemed uncertain and confused (not the age thing) as to how to interpret the subject "Your nomination for Sovereign of the World". As a result the "formal" part of the meeting was not as animated as usu-

al. However one proposal was that as our Queen seems to be doing a good job perhaps her position as Head of State should be extended to cover all the world and not just the Commonwealth as at present. Do we really need another "supreme being" was a question posed and it was generally agreed that it would not be such a good idea. It was suggested that the attributes for a Sovereign of the World should include someone who is internation-ally well known, commands attention, pleasantly dominates proceedings, amusing, intelligent, likeable and not shy - qualities possessed by one Grump's nomination - Dame Edna Everage!! Despite a somewhat low key debate a seriously good time was still had by all.

Next meeting - Wed. 18th May Venue - Le Pierre Bistrot

Subject - The European Union - In/Out or Undecided. Introduction - ALL MEMBERS.

HISTORY GROUP

Jean Hicks



At this month's history group we enjoyed a DVD entitled "In Search of Shakespeare-A Time of Revolution" ----a real Elizabethan who done it! The scene was set with Shakespeare's life in the early part of Elizabeth's reign, at the beginning of the cultural revolution. We saw the see-saw politics of Henry VIII and the split from Rome .Through local documents we followed William's father's career in the small

town of Stratford upon Avon rising to become Alderman and Mayor. Contrary to myth Shakespeare comes from a wealthy family, his father making money as a glover, money lender and illegally dealing in wool. We followed William's early school days and the medieval mystery plays that were seen in Coventry and subsequently banned. Soon William's world is turned upside down . His father is hounded by informers and he loses his fortune. In the new Protestant state of Elizabeth Shakespeare is loyal to the old faith. At 14 he leaves school and starts work , ruining his chance of going to University. Things didn't get any better for William when he was supposedly beaten and thrown out of town for poaching by the local landowner Sir Thomas Lucy. At 18 William gets a local farmer's daughter pregnant but in Worcester Cathedral we learn he is to marry two different women called Anne on the same day! His marriage gives us his first known work- a love poem. Episode 1 of the video ended with the savagery of the Somerville Plot.

Next meeting: May 9th. Speaker Jackie Checketts on the "History of Stratford Tramway"

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.

PAINTING/DRAWING GROUP

Dorothy Jones



We continue to enjoy our Monday mornings. Do pop into one of our sessions if you are interested in joining us. Our May meetings are May 9th & 23rd, 10am– 12 noon in the Methodist Hall side lounge.

PILATES G<u>ROUP - MONDAY</u>



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

PILATES GROUP - WEDNESDAY



Weekly at St Andrew's Parish Centre, Shottery, 10.15 to 11.15 . For more information call Sue Workman on 297061.

PLAY READING GROUP

Sylvía Crooks

Phyllis Bailey



We met on Thursday 21st April, the Queens birthday. After coffee we read 'The American Dream' by Edward Albee. Lots to discuss as it was a strange play: a black comedy. Not our usual kind of play, however most interesting. We next meet on Thursday 19th May at Sylvia's at 10.30am for coffee.

READING GROUP – MONDAY

This month we read 'When God was a Rabbit ' by Sarah Winman. Good Housekeeping described it as 'mesmerising' and five out of seven of our group found it just that and had plenty to say about its virtues albeit just what was somehow lacking from the tale by the other two!. It certainly offered an accurate notion of London social life in the sixties following the early post war continuation of austerity and inhibition

that marked the previous decade. In other words it was both amusing and shocking . One member was able from memory to confirm its accuracy although it seems that the freedom did not become apparent in the country as whole until the 70's. It is full of humour; a plus, no doubt! Despite the title it is far from blasphemous!

READING GROUP—WEDNESDAY

Dorothy Jones This month we had free choice reading which is always interesting. 'GIRL ONTHE TRAIN' by Paula Hawkins was a good read and highly recommended.

Also 'THIS BOY' by Alan Johnson, memories of his childhood. Jill, our member, read a novel 'JILL' by Philip Larkin which was set in Oxford in 1943.

We are now reading 'I CAN'T BEGIN TO TELL YOU' by Elizabeth Buchan, sounds interesting!

READING GROUP - FRIDAY

We read a book called 'A Foreign Country' by Charles Cumming. This is spy thriller in the style of John le Carre. The group enjoyed the book and a couple said that they would like to read some more of his books. The gist of the story is that the new head of MI6 goes missing just before she starts her job and a disgraced spy is assigned the job of finding her.

ROCK AND ROLL GROUP

We had a varied programme of music ranging over several decades showing different aspects of rock & roll with some interesting discussion as a result. Our numbers are growing which is very pleasing and we can welcome more if you are interested. Just turn up.

SCIENCE, NATURE & 'ALL THINGS' TECHNICAL GROUP

Twenty four members took a trip to Birmingham to visit the Coffin Works and the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. It was a very interesting visit to both museums. At the Coffin Works we saw how the company made and supplied all manner of items to furnish coffins (they did not make or supply coffins them-

Coral Bradley

Coral Bradley

Geoff Bridgewater

Copy to Editor for next Newsletter by Sunday 22nd May 2016

selves) appropriate to the High Victorian period and the years since. This included brassware, such as hinges, handles, name plates, then the textiles such as shrouds and lining materials. After lunch, the visit to the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter showed a company making mostly 9 carat gold jewellery for sale to wholesalers and the larger Jewellery Shop chains. It brought home to us how dreadful working conditions were in these Victorian factories. A very enjoyable trip and thanks to Geoff for organising it.

Next meeting on Friday 13th May. Look for emails giving details.

SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

Out to LUNCH! The next lunch will be on Sunday the 8th. May 2016 at the Navigation Inn, Wootton Wawen. The following lunch will be on Sunday the 5th. June 2016 at the Kings Court Hotel, Alcester. Names please to Brian Bradley on 01789 488551.

SYMPHONY HALL CONCERTS

26th May 2-15pm. We will leave the Stratford Leisure Centre promptly at 12-15pm and pick up our Henley group en-route to Birmingham.

All tickets have been sold but if you wish to be on the reserve list phone Dorothy Jones.

THEATRE GROUP.

On 21 May we go to Malvern to see 'Travels with my Aunt', a Graham Greene play performed by just four actors. We have seen them before and they are very good. The coach leaves Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. All tickets for this have been sold.

On 18 June we go to the Belgrade to see 'The Birthday Party' by Harold Pinter The cost of this will be announced at the May meeting.

WALKING GROUP

Our walk on Wednesday 13th April 2016 was a very enjoyable affair. The weather was perfect—warm, sunny, hardly any breeze- and the spring flowers along the way were very attractive. We met in Shipston and walked around a favourite hard surface route via Barcheston, Willington and Burmington back into Shipston. About 5 miles and not much in the way of hills.

Our next walk will be on Wednesday 11th May starting at 10.00am. We start from Ettington Church—street parking is available. This will be a 6 mile walk, mostly on hard surfaces as the ground is still very wet. I recommend good walking shoes or boots and bring along a drink and biscuit, if you wish, for the brief half-time break.

WHAT'S ON – MONTHLY MEETINGS AT STRATFORD, SHOTTERY, DENE VALLEY AND ALCESTER U3AS.

Stratford -	· 2!	5th May 🛛 -	- "The Silk Road"	-
Shottery -	- 71	th June 🛛 ·	- "The Motor Heritage Centre at Gaydon"	- /
Dene Valley -	· 1(0th May 🛛 ·	- "The History of Walton and the Walton Scandal"	-
Alcester -	· 71	th June 🛛 ·	- "The Antiques Roadshow (A visitors observations)"	-





Valery Redfern

Dorothy Jones

Coral Bradley

Brían Bradley

Roger Butler. Adela Thomas Lady Hamilton. John Dallimore.

GROUP	GROUP LEADER	USUAL MEETING DAY (MONTHLY)	
All That Swing & Jazz	Brian Bradley	4th Thursday 2.00—4.00pm	
AmDram & Supper	Geoff Bridgewater	As Announced	
Art Appreciation	Sylvia Kentish Pam Collins	3rd Friday 2.00pm	
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	2nd & 4th Wednesday 2.30-4.00pm	
Dinahs Luncheon	Sylvia Crooks	1st Tuesday for lunch	
Discussion	Athena Roderick	2nd Wednesday	
Film Group	Mary Fishleigh Mavis Pickett	2nd Tuesday 2.00pm	
Games –Scrabble, Dominoes and Cards	Sue Tringham	1st & 3rd Monday 2.00—4.00pm	
Garden Appreciation Group	Jayne Jones Suzy Genge	2nd Tuesday	
Grumpy Old Men	Graham Mitchell	3rd Wednesday for lunch	
History	David Dumper	2nd Monday 2.00pm	
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday 10.00am	
Painting/Drawing	Dorothy Jones Lynette Forsdyke-Crofts	As Announced	
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 & All 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	

<u>:ART OF</u> ENGLAND U3A ROTA FOR AFTERNOON TEAS н

MONTH	GROUP	<u>MONTH</u>	GROUP
May 2016	History Group	August 2016	Reading Groups
June 2016	The Choir	September 2016	Rock & Roll Group
July 2016	Grumpy Old Men	October 2016	Walking Group