



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England U3A

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November 2011 Newsletter

TODAYS SPEAKER

The speakers on 3rd November are Joseph and Rebecca Fossett who are going to talk to us about Joseph's Amazing Camels. Something quite different!!!

NEXT MONTHS SPEAKER

In December we are going to be ably entertained by Margot McCleary with Velvet Glove – a storytelling entertainment. Her one woman show will bring back some old favourites and should set us really in the mood for Christmas.

Membership Fees of £16.00 per person are now due and can be paid at this meeting. Alternatively they can be posted to the Treasurer, Allan Lyons at 385 Birmingham Road, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 0RF. Please pay as soon as possible – Please remember that they must be paid by 31st December 2011.

DIARIES for 2012 are now available at £2.00 each.

Details on the Methodist Hall's new locking system have been sent to Group leaders who meet here but if I have missed any one and you need to know how you can get in, please let me know.

Thank you *.David Sladden*

There will be a Group Leaders meeting in the Lounge of the Methodist Hall on 18th November at 10.00 am. If you would like lunch after this meeting please advise Dorothy Jones, who will arrange this if there is sufficient support. More details to follow.

Postal Scam:

Can you circulate this around, especially as Xmas is fast approaching - it has been confirmed by Royal Mail. The Trading Standards Office are making people aware of the following scam:

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a Premium rate number).

DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize .

If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £315 for the phone call.

If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 020 7239 6655.

For more information, see the Crime Stoppers website:

Members of the Craft Group will be organising a raffle, "What's My Name?", at the December meeting with all proceeds being donated to "Warwickshire Association for the Blind". This association offers support to all residents of Warwickshire with a visual impairment and is based in Leamington. Some of our members have attended this group. (www.wa4b.org.uk)

The Shakespeare Hospice Bookshop, in Rother St. often receives multiple copies of modern paperback fiction, in good condition. We are collecting them for use by reading groups. Please call in and browse through those in stock. We shall continue to add to collection.

Norma Hampson for Shakespeare Hospice.

On Line Course from National Office.

The China Group have received the 3rd Unit of the course and will be taking a bit more time to research it bearing in mind the extra commitments members have over Christmas and New Year. Unit 3 will cover 206BC to 220AD with the spotlight on Chinese Inventions which changed the world.

Unit 2 was discussed on Wednesday afternoon, 26th October in the Annex and a presentation of Norma's photos completed an informative afternoon. Of particular interest was the information found about the magnificent, massive tomb constructed by Shi Huangdi, the Qin Dynasty Emperor, which contained the famous terracotta army of 6,000 life sized soldiers. Excavation of the tomb is incomplete due to the dangerously high level of mercury detected.

New Opera Interest Group

During the Classical Music meeting we briefly discussed the proposed opera group. I will explore a group visit to one of the operas relayed at the Cinema. We agreed not to attend every month. More news at the November meeting.

Aline Cumming

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Art Appreciation Group



Our October Meeting was at Phyl Collins where we watched an excellent and informative film on 20th Century British Artists.

The next meeting will be on Friday 18th November at 31 Manor Road when Annabel Shirt will give a talk on her work as a Textile Artist.

Our Christmas Lunch is on Friday 16th December, at 12.30 at the Opposition in Sheep Street – looking forward to seeing you all there!

Pat Wood

Big Band Swing Jazz Group



Change of Group Leader

Our October 2011 meeting was my final meeting as Group Leader. Having had the privilege of organising this Group for nigh on 10 years, it was time for me to step down. I am happy to say that Tony Badham (01789 772520) will take over as Group Leader from our next meeting which is on Tuesday 22nd November 2011 at 2pm in the Lounge of the Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon.

Tony will be introducing a slightly new format beginning with the November 2011 meeting. The main change will be that everybody attending the meetings will be asked to pay a £2 (per meeting) entry fee to cover the cost of room hire and the provision of tea/coffee.

With Tony's extensive knowledge of Swing and Jazz, and excellent organising skills, I look forward to seeing the Swing and Jazz Group prosper and move forward in the coming months. I am confident that the Group will continue to give him their enthusiastic support and help that was so readily given to me during my tenure as Group Leader.

Dennis Sully

Bridge Group



The Bridge Group is friendly, sociable, keen to encourage new members and we offer encouragement to "rusty" ex- players. The Group meets every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Side Room next to the kitchen.

For complete beginners, separate introduction to card play is available. You can contact Ann Parker to arrange for introductory sessions.

John Yeomans

Chinwags



In September we met at Grants again. The topic was 'Can we do without newspapers?' and in short the answer was a resounding NO. Despite the Kindle and iPad and other forms of electronic tablet we agreed we would be reluctant to abandon our papers. Discussion ranged

widely after that and we agreed on 24 October we would talk about intrusive advertising.

Aline Cumming

The Choir



The side room was filled to capacity at our last rehearsal – over thirty, so we were able to harmonise briefly but most of the time we were directed by Stewart away from certain disharmonies!

We enjoy our singing and look forward to the next concerts – one of which will be for Dene Valley.

We are getting so keen now that we are encouraged by Stewart to ask for our voice range part by Email!

Many thanks to Dorothy and Ruth and many others for their contribution to our Choir.

Tony Griffiths

Classical Music Group



At our October meeting we enjoyed a film of Puccini's opera La Boheme, provided by Howard. Anna Netrebko sang Mimi and Rolando Villazon sang Rudolfo both beautifully. Because it was a film (as opposed to a recording in an opera house) the acting, the emotion and also the business, such as the young men teasing each other and horsing about, were more immediate. Although initially merry it is a sad story in any medium reflected in Puccini's delicate music. We were transported to the Latin quarter in Paris and became absorbed in their lives and moved by their fate. A great success, thank you Howard.

Aline Cumming

Computer Group at Stratford School . (Formerly Stratford High School)



The Typing Course is underway. The following dates have been booked on Thursdays from 4pm to 6pm. - November 10th and 24th, and December 8th and 15th.

Any suggestions for future topics? Please let Ron or Robyn know.

Robyn Nicoll

Cooks Club Group



Unfortunately, it has been decided to put meetings on hold for a while as we could do with some more members.

I will be putting out a sheet at the November U3A meeting, so if anyone is interested, please sign up!

Chris Heaps

Creative Craft Group

Our October meeting was once again using Fimo to make Nativity figures and decorations. Everyone present seemed to enjoy the session very much according to the laughter and the hilarity. The Nativity figurines too, were very impressive.



The November meeting, begins the start of Christmas with a Ribbon Wreath, which should be very interesting.

The date for the November meeting is the 17th and we will be meeting as usual in the Annex. Why don't you come along and let your Creativity run wild and join in the fun.

Roma Rudd

Dinahs

Edward Moon was again our venue this month. We invited Robyn to join us, a thank you from Dinahs for being a great Chairperson.



We tried to put the world to rights as always, Teresa May and the Human Rights Act, Computers and trying to keep up with the changes, Motorised Scooters!!! Sex education in schools; in the forties, look under the gooseberry bush!! News from Sue Tringham : 2 tons of fruit was collected and distributed at Anne Hathaways by Transition Stratford : Well Done all.

November 1st we meet at Jimmy Spices 12.noon.

Sylvia Crooks.

Discussion Group (changed from Lets Talk)

Discussion Group Wed 12 Oct. "How our childhood experiences influence us". As I was away on other U3A business, Sue Tringham took over for me. It reads as though it was a lively discussion. Viz Words of wisdom from parents and if they were acted upon. Established that over half of the meeting did have happy childhoods. Some personal details came out which was interesting and helped the group to know each other better. Looking under gooseberry bushes to find a baby. Someone was very upset with her father when her mother had to go to work to prop up the family finances when father's earnings fell. She felt she had to help mother by making sure everything was ready when mother got in from work. Felt she was horrible to her younger brother. Someone recounted how they were brought up on a hill farm with no running water and had to help from a young age. Next meeting 9th November at the West End. Thanks Sue for this report.



Athena Roderick

Family History Group

The Family History Group met on 20 October and included one new member who went home very happy having found a record that she had been seeking for many years.



The group meets on the third Thursday of the month at Stratford High School at 3.45pm. Dates for the next 2 meetings are

17 November and 15 December

We primarily use the Internet to research using Census returns and birth, marriage and death indexes, and there is always someone on hand to offer encouragement and advice. I also have lots of resources gathered over many years of research which I am happy to share.

New members are always welcome.

Sue Ocock

Grumpy Old Men Group



Our discussion on the "Throwaway Society" was led by John Shelley who posed the questions - what do we mean by throw away, when was it created, at what cost and can it be changed. As could be anticipated brought up in the "buy for life" era (the same bed through married life until death) the Grumps deplored the throw away philosophy but agreed that it could be defined as getting rid of perfectly good, usable products and changing them for the "latest model". The trend probably started in earnest in the 1950/60 with the advent of mass produced, relatively affordable consumer goods and accelerated rapidly with the astonishing advances in technology. While manufacturers pressurized consumers to have the very latest design of everything the general public must also accept responsibility as they were very willing to be persuaded. Our "must have" insatiable appetite for newer, cleverer, and even more efficient products has undoubtedly contributed to today's economic woes through the massive scale of personal borrowing and debt but perhaps the greatest cost is the uncontrolled depletion of the earth's natural resources to satisfy this demand. Can it be changed? - almost certainly not although in the so called developed countries it may be moderated due to economic pressures but globally it will continue to grow as the emerging nations become more affluent and the demand for consumer goods increases. Although recycling has now become "cool", never again will we see the era of the "returnable" pop and beer bottle.

Grump of the Month Award went to John Shelley with an honourable mention to Ian Hyde for his Enoch and Eli tales.

Next meeting - Wed. Nov. 16th **Venue** - Le Bistro Pierre. **Chairman for the Day** - Ian Hyde.

Subject - Should we keep old traditions or destroy them - **Introduced** by Sid Slaughter.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



This month we are changing over from using charts to play from, to normal music. This could cause some fun and games!! *We still need some more members to fully utilise the two Octaves of Hand Bells.* We are very much in need of Music Stands – if anyone has any surplus to requirements or know of a cheap source of supply, please let me know.

Ron Castleton

History Group



At our October Meeting Norma Hampson gave us a talk, illustrated with slides, on the history of Stratford Cemetery in Evesham Road.

In the 19th Century, because of increases in the population, churchyards where local people were buried were becoming full. In 1825 the first Municipal Cemetery was opened in Liverpool; in 1881 the local authority in Stratford purchased six acres in Evesham Road from the Marquis of Hertford at a cost of £1,500. The design of the cemetery was decided after a competition and the Bishop of Worcester consecrated most of the ground (some areas were left for consecration by particular faiths such as Roman Catholics). The first burial was that of a child, Hannah Wright, in October 1881.

Norma showed us slides of various monuments and graves such as that of Marie Corelli. One area is looked after by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission where 97 Canadians are buried. In another section there are the graves of 7 Italians and 4 Germans and we were particularly interested to see the area set aside for Romany burials. One of the more entertaining facts was that in 1939 perambulators were allowed, but they had to be left at the gates – minus the baby, we hope!

At our meeting on Monday, 14th November, Tony Whiteley is going to show us a DVD “Oranges and Sunshine”, about the young children who were taken to Australia in the 1950’s and 1960’s and what subsequently happened to them. Usual Venue – Side Room in the Methodist Hall at 2 pm – All are welcome.

Sheela Burchill

Keep Fit Group



Keep Fit is now full and we have started a waiting list.

For more information please ring Mary Palmer or Joy Baylis for further details.

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



Gwyneth was away so we met at Sylvia's in October. We welcomed a new member over coffee, then read The Fifteen Minute Hamlet by Tom Stoppard, very funny; also Keep Fit Class by Carol Reeve another comedy.

We next meet 4th November at 11.am, venue to be decided.

If you would like to join us please ring Sylvia.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry Reading Group



Unfortunately two of our founder members are leaving the group because they are having to take on other responsibilities and will be unable to attend regularly. This means that we can take one or two more U3A members into the group. We meet at the West End pub, Bull Street, Old Town, on the second Wednesday of every month at 10.0 until 12.0 mid-day. If you love Poetry and would like to pay us a visit to see if this group is for you, please ring Jackie Williams.

Poetry and Prose Reading Group

The meeting in October was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances but we shall meet on 9th November at 2.00pm reading Keats and Roger McGough.



Ann Davies

Reading Group – Wednesday



This month we did free choice reading which included the following.

“Brick Lane” by Monica Ali, the story of 18 years old Naseem brought over from Bangladesh to marry a man 20 years older than herself and living in a council flat on a run down estate in the East End of London. “Little Boy Lost” by Marghanita Laski, the poignant story set in

France of a couple separated by war . Jean, their young child hidden by the local priest and sent along the resistance route to be cared for by nuns in an orphanage. After the war when his father searches for him, can he be sure that the child Jean in their care is really his son?

"When God was a Rabbit" by Sarah Winman, a book about the childhood and later life of a brother and sister as told by the girl. The brother always being complicit in what happens to her. It tells of their move to Cornwall after their lawyer father had a large win football pool's win and how their subsequent life changed when living in a large property run as a B & B. God is the name of her childhood pet rabbit.

"The Confession." by John Grisham is about the false imprisonment of a negro football player for the murder of a white teenage cheerleader in East Texas. The story charts his life before and in prison and concludes with the confession of the real white murderer just 4 days before the execution on Death Row. Will there be time for the truth to convince lawyers, judges and politicians?

Sandra Whiteley

Reading Group - Friday



Whenever our group gets a book that has won something like the Whitbread or Orange prize we fear the worst. So it was with trepidation that we started *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai. It should have been a good book after all we chose it from the description but true to form it wasn't. The story of a retired judge, his teenaged grand-daughter and their cook who all live in a northern province of India should have made an interesting story but it was boring and the characters didn't come to life at all. It didn't even have a proper ending. Better luck next time.

The library has got into a pickle with all the reading groups and has deleted us from their list. We do have a wonderful librarian, though, who is championing our cause and makes sure we get a book. She has suggested that it might help if we change our name so we have asked if we can be called The Heart of England Reading Group. If no-one else has this name as from the 1 November we will change.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



We continue our journey through the alphabet using the letters I & J this month. This surprisingly gave us a varied selection of music that ranged from some very early Everly Brothers up to some 1980s Stones and Moody Blues. Next month we will be in the annexe at the usual time and day – second Thursday at 2.00. If you have some spare time you will be very welcome. No dancing expected.

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



In October we visited GWR Steam Museum at Swindon. It was a fascinating tour that tells the story of the people who worked at the Swindon Railway works, designed and built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The museum takes you back in time to a period of amazing technological innovation and incredible manual labour by a workforce of over 12,000 people. The construction of the GWR network is also displayed.

After the tour we had a great lunch at Sally Pusseys, a pub near Wootton Bassett.

November 11th Visit to Forge Mill Needle Museum.

December 9th Christmas Social in the Annexe of the Methodist Hall

Sandra Sladden

Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group

Report by Dennis Sully of the September 2011 Meeting.



At our September meeting we heard Billy May and His Orchestra playing "No Strings" followed by Coleman Hawkins and Neil Hefti playing "Lucky Duck". Artists Anita O'Day, Geraldo, Bud Shank and others played us through the first half of the meeting, until Urbie Green and His Orchestra played us to the tea interval with "Let's Fall in Love". After a chatty tea break Jack Parnell and His Orchestra played "Darktown Poker Club" followed by Lester Young playing "Lester Leaps Again". Artists Count Basie, Flip Phillips, Dakota Staton, John Dankworth and others kept us

entertained until the final number "Top Hat, White Tie and Tails" played by Johnny Gibbs and His Orchestra brought us to the end of the meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 24th November 2011 at 2pm in the Lounge of The Methodist Church, Old Town, Stratford upon Avon.

Dennis Sully

New Year Lunch on Saturday 21st January 2012 at Le Bistrot Pierre.

Now that our AGM & 10th Birthday have been enjoyed & autumn is upon us, we can look forward to Christmas & beyond. And beyond means our New Year Lunch, which was such a success last year. It will once again be held at Le Bistrot Pierre within The Swans Nest Hotel & it will cost £13/head, an extremely attractive price for such good value. It will be 3 courses, with a vegetarian choice for each course. Wine & coffee are not included, but there will be a quiz again, as it went down very well last year. You will probably need to book early, to avoid the rush.

The booking form and menu choice is available at this meeting or can be downloaded from our website. Please return your menu selection with payment of £13.00 per person to Athena Roderick at the next meeting or to 17 Gifford Walk, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 9LN, Tel No 01789 551416 "

Sunday Lunch Group



The November lunch will be on Sunday 6th at Le Bistrot Pierre, Stratford-upon-Avon

The December lunch will be on Sunday the 4th at the Henley Golf Club. As the numbers are limited could you please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to come. Tel: 01789 488551; E-mail: brianbradley@uwclub.net

There will be no more Sunday lunches until February 2012

Brian Bradley

Our next visit to the Symphony Hall is a Matinee on Wednesday 25th April 2012.



CBSO "British Classics"

Conductor: John Wilson

Clarinet: Michael Collins

Programme Details later.

Theatre Group



The two trips that have been planned for December and February are completely booked up and we have a waiting list for both dates, As yet the brochures are not out yet for the spring so nothing else is booked at this date.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 9TH November 2011 at 10 a.m. prompt. The walk will be led by Tony and Sandra Whiteley and start from Toddenham – this is an easy undulating 5.5 mile walk grid ref SP241363.

Parking is at the village Hall (small contribution required) - Toddenham is between Shipston and Moreton in the Marsh as the crow flies.

I recommend good walking shoes and also bring a drink with you. Look forward to seeing you.

Valerie Redfern

WHAT'S ON – Monthly Meetings at Stratford, Shottery and Dene Valley U3As.

Stratford –30th Nov.–“Sulgrave Manor & the Washingtons”-Martin Sirot-Smith.

Shottery – 6th Dec. - "Social Event".

DeneValley –8th Nov. – “The Christmas Truce 1914” - Sir Andrew Hamilton

Group Leaders Contact List		
<i>Group</i>	<i>Group Leader</i>	<i>Usual Meeting date (Monthly)</i>
Art Appreciation	Phyl Collins Pat Wood	3 rd Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Tony Badham	4 th Tuesday 2 – 4 pm
Bird Watching Group	John Stagg	See Newsletter for dates
Bridge	John Yeomans	Every Tuesday 2.30pm
Chinwags Luncheon Group	Aline Cumming	4 th Monday 12 Noon
Choir	Ruth Grahame Dorothy Jones	11.45 for 12 noon, Fortnightly
Classical Music	Aline Cumming	2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm
Cooks Club	Chris Heaps	4 th Wednesday
Creative Crafts	Roma Rudd	3 rd Thursday 2 – 4 pm
Computer Group	Robyn Nicoll	2 nd Thursday - 4.15 pm
Dinahs Luncheon Group	Sylvia Crooks	1 st Tuesday for Lunch
Discussion Group	Athena Roderick	2 nd Wednesday
Family History – Genealogy	Sue Ocock	3 rd Thursday – 4.00 pm
Grumpy Old Men Group	Graham Mitchell	3 rd Wednesday for Lunch
Hand Bell Ringing Group	Ron Castleton	Alternate Mondays 10am
History Group	Janet Anslow	2 nd Monday – 2.0 pm
Keep Fit	Mary Palmer	Every Thursday am
Luncheon Group – Sundays	Brian Bradley	- see Newsletter for dates -
Pilates Group	Gill Ganner	Mondays – 12.15-1.15pm
Play Reading	Sylvia Crooks	-see Newsletter for dates -
Poetry Reading	Jess Monk	2 nd Weds. 10 – 12 am
Poetry & Prose Appreciation	Anne Davies	As appropriate
Reading Group – Wednesday	Dorothy Jones	3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm
Reading Group – Monday	Phyllis Bailey	3 rd Monday–2.30-4.30pm
Reading Group – Friday	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Rock & Roll Music Group	Coral Bradley	2 nd Thursday – 2 – 4pm
Science & Nature Group	Geoff Bridgewater	2 nd Fridays
Stratford Swingers	Dennis Sully	4 th Thursday
Symphony Hall Visits	Dorothy Jones & Gwyn Bevins	As appropriate
Theatre Visits & Outings	Coral Bradley	As appropriate
Walking	Valerie Redfern	2 nd Wednesday

TEA ROTA.

November – History Group.

December – Pilates Group