



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Heart of England U3A

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October 2011 Newsletter

TODAYS SPEAKER

The speaker for October is Mr. Michael Smith, the Property Manager from Croome Park who will give us a talk on the restoration of this lovely property.

NEXT MONTHS 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!!!

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 but 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.

The Archive for the Heart of England U3A

I have uploaded the latest photographs from the Tenth Birthday Party and from groups, to the U3A website. Look under Photograph and Document Archive. - Tenth Birthday, Science & Nature, Walking. They are in the form of pages which you can view on line or they are printable through Acrobat Reader (probably already on your computer or can be installed free using the link on the website.).

If you have any photographs or other memorabilia from U3A activities I would be very pleased to receive them - either as copies or photographs, or I can copy or photograph them.

Edwin Lilly

On Line Course from National Office.

11 members will be covering the course on China and have received Unit 1.

Their first get-together to discuss research on this unit was held in the annex on Thursday afternoon 29th September. Members were treated to a slide show presented by Tony Whiteley of his and Sandra's recent visit to China.

Unit 2 has been sent via e-mail and this unit will be covering the Qin Dynasty 221-206BC, with a spotlight on Science in China, and an introduction to Chinese Writing.

STOP PRESS: The Fairtrade Shop will be open for members at the todays meeting. – which will be selling tea, coffee, cocoa, cereal, rice, pasta, cookies, chocolate, sweets, dried, sugar, and paper goods.

Your support will be appreciated.

New Opera Interest Group

The suggestion of an Opera Interest Group met with a small but enthusiastic response so a list will go on the Board to sign. Expect the Group to start meeting in the Autumn.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Art Appreciation Group



We had a very successful outing at Compton Verney, first enjoying a delicious lunch and then viewing the Stanley Spencer exhibition, which focused on his garden and landscape paintings of the 1920's to 40's, some of us first going on a guided tour.

Next meeting is at Phyl's house, watching a TV programme on 20th century British Artists.

Phyl Collins

Big Band Swing Jazz Group



At our August meeting we heard the Red Norvo Septet playing "Roses of Picardy" followed by Ted Heath and His Music playing "Cotton Fields". Artists Lena Horne, Benny Carter, Chris Barber, Tommy Dorsey and other played us through the first half of the meeting, until John Kirby and His Orchestra played us to the tea interval with "St. Louis Blues". After a chatty tea interval Woody Herman and His Orchestra played "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" followed by an early number with Rosetta Crawford and Her Hep Cats playing

"Stop It Joe". Artists Pee Wee Hunt, Ella Fitzgerald, Lu Watters and others kept us entertained until the final number "Blues for JP" played by Woody Herman brought us to the end of the meeting.

Having organised this Group for nearly 10years, I will be stepping down as the Group Organiser after our 25th October 2011 meeting.

Dennis Sully

Bridge Group



The Bridge Group is very friendly, very sociable and very keen to encourage new members. Following the life-long learning ethos of all U3As we can offer encouragement to "rusty" ex-players and, for complete beginners, separate introduction card play to get you started.

We meet every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 in the Methodist Hall Side Room 1. Complete beginners can contact Ann parker to arrange for introductory sessions.

John Yeomans

Chinwags



We did not meet in August due to holidays etc. We will have met on Monday September 26, and the October meeting is likely to be on Monday 24 October at 12 noon at Grants, Sheep Street. See you there!

Aline Cumming

The Choir



We were so pleased with our contribution to the 10th Anniversary – and have already had an invitation to sing at Dene Valley. Now we are expanding our repertoire and really appreciate Stuarts Musical Choices. The day after the concert we went into some "Phase 2" ideas – lots of points of view and we are enthusiastic about our thriving group.

Just in case you didn't catch all the subtleties' of the fist song, it is published here in its entirety! Words by Dorothy Jones and Chris Heaps – Music by Richard Rogers.

SUNG TO THE TUNE OF DO- RE -MI

Let's start at the very beginning
A very good place to start
We'd like to tell you if we may
'bout Heart of England U3A,
U3A,U3A.
And how it started, if we may,
U3A,U3A

Ron Castleton from Loxley Road
Had a really good idea
To start a new group in the town
Convenient and very near
Ron was first to take the chair

All the hard work had been done
Tony Whitely was the vice
Heart of England had begun!

Soon we had three reading groups
Music -classical and jazz
Tea and biscuits were enjoyed
Served in style with great p'zazz
Val took people on her walks
We went to interesting talks
Bev amused us with his quips
And organised our trips

Now that we are ten years old
You can do most anything
Read a poem, be a grump
Ring a bell or learn to sing
Surf the web and learn to twitter
Fill your brain with history
Have a chinwag or get fitter
Watch a birdie in a tree .tree tree tree

Robyn now has left the chair
Our little ray of Aussie sun
Elliot and Tony too
Thanks for all that you have done
The list of hobbies never ends
We've all made lots of lovely friends
Mem'ries to reflect upon
Heart of England will go on
With lots of thanks to everyone -and Ron!

Tony Griffiths

Classical Music Group



We are again indebted to George for his providing us with an Emergency Programme, which was both interesting and varied. Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture captures the salty tang of the sea and the excitement of the waves as they rushed against the rocks – a far cry from our comfortable lounge and record player! We can always count on George for a spot of opera, and today his favourite Maria Callas delivered a near-perfect "Caro Nome" from Rigoletto. Back to earth, we enjoyed the contrast of Beethoven's second movement of his mighty Seventh Symphony.

A light relief came in the exquisite Trois Gymnopedies by Satie, a delight for all piano enthusiasts. A witty number from Flanders and Swan was followed by an item by Flotsom and Jetsom, which many of us remembered from days past. After tea we heard the First movement of Marler's great Symphony No.2. This brought to mind the resounding success of the young Simon Rattle with the CBSO in the early days of his conductorship. Then something truly new to our ears was a work by Adams from "Nixon in China". The foxtrot "The Chairman Dances" was interesting, but might find favour with a second hearing. Conclusion came with a beautiful Schubert Klavierstucke, immaculately played by the pianist Rudolph Buchbinder.

STOP PRESS At our October meeting, Howard will present a DVD of that most passionate of operas: Bizet's Carmen. Not to be missed.

Valma Rose

We have plenty of room and welcome new members if they enjoy listening to a wide variety of classical, romantic and even some modern composers. We have started bring-your-own favourite some months. Come and try us.

Second Tuesday 2pm in the Lounge

Aline Cumming

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



We aim to begin the Typing Course on **Thursday, 20th October**, from **4pm to 6pm**. We plan to have 5 sessions before Christmas. Members are required to meet in the entrance to the reception area by **3.55pm** and will be escorted to the computer room. This Typing Course is recommended for beginners and would also be a good brush up for the more experienced.

N B - There will now be a charge for the use of the school's equipment, yet to be finalised but anticipated to be about £20 for the 5 sessions. Therefore, payment for the course in advance will be necessary. All members who have enrolled in the Typing Course will be notified of the cost by e-mail or phone.

It is not too late to enrol for this course. Please sign the sheet on the notice board table or contact Ron or Robyn.

Robyn Nicoll

Cooks Club Group



Simple starters were the theme at the last Cooks' Club meeting, where delicious stuffed tomatoes and mackerel pate proved that a lot can be done with just four ingredients. Unfortunately, it has been decided to put meetings on hold for a while as we could do 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



Although our September meeting was very small we all had a great time working with Fimo. As one of our members remarked it was just like being back in our childhood playing with plasticine. The big difference is one can produce some beautiful works of art with the Fimo. We all enjoyed our afternoon so much we will be continuing with the Fimo models next month. We hope to produce a Nativity Set to put on display at

Christmas.

Our next meeting will be on the 20th October in the Annex. 2pm-4pm. We would all be delighted to welcome some new members to our group so please come and join us. We are a very friendly group and cater our projects to suit everyone.

Regards

Roma Rudd.

Card Making workshop



Carolyn is pleased to inform members that a gift of £50, accumulated from the sale of cards at monthly meetings, has been sent to Vale Wildlife Rescue.

The next day workshop will be held on Friday, 14th October in the Annex from 12.30pm to 4.30pm. "Christmas" will be the theme and recycling will be the aim and new comers are most welcome to join us for an informal afternoon, including lunch.

Contact Carolyn.

The Card Club appreciate the support given by members who purchase cards from the stall at monthly meetings. All the proceeds from these sales are given to local organisations and to well known charities chosen by members. Materials required for the card making are provided by members of the card club and their friends. Some of the local organisations to benefit in the past year: Shakespeare Hospice, Different Strokes, Salvation Army, Methodist Church Redevelopment Fund, Willowvale Ward at St. Michael's Hospital Warwick. In total, £412 has been distributed.

Dinahs



Edward Moon Restaurant was our venue in September, a first visit for many of us. All enjoyed the food, no complaints, then a good discussion on several subjects. In Scarborough General Hospital the food was so bad James Martin the chef is on a mission, to come up with a plan to provide healthy, appetising meals for the patients. Hospitals do not seem to rate food high in their priorities. Also the riots were on the menu, it was amazing to hear that 80% of the people arrested had previous convictions!!

We meet again on the 4th October 12.15, same venue.

Sylvia Crooks.

Discussion Group (changed from Lets Talk)



Our topic was "Our Town". The majority felt that we live in a small market town & we are losing many benefits & joys of a small town by continuous building & enlargement. Most felt very strongly that if people wanted to live in a very modern town, then they should live elsewhere.

Next meeting will be Wed 12th October at 1PM - at The West End

Athena Roderick

Family History Group



The Family History Group met on 15 September full of renewed enthusiasm after the summer holiday.



The group usually meets on the third Thursday of the month at Stratford High School at 3.45pm. Dates for the next 3 meetings are 20 October, 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



The Grumps welcomed two new members to their September meeting, a healthy gathering of 18 souls for lunch. Derek Phillips kicked off the discussion - Is there a case for a benign dictatorship - with the contention that democracy is in reality already dead as our elected representatives actions do not truly reflect the views of the people e.g. in matters such as immigration, membership of the E.U., human rights legislation and capital punishment. A benign dictator would be able to use his or her power to carry out the will of the people whilst striving to achieve equality for all. Unfortunately power corrupts and even initially well meaning dictators soon become corrupted in order to maintain their power. Then the problem is how to get rid of them. Despite the shortcomings of our present democratic system in which the nearest thing we have had to benign dictators were possibly Maggie Thatcher and Tony Blair it was felt that we were probably politically better off as we are than with a benign dictator who would inevitably go bad.

Next meeting - Wed. 19th October. **Venue** - Le Bistro Pierre. **Chairman for the Day** - Frank Hodgson.

Subject - The Throwaway Society introduced by John Shelley.

Graham Mitchell

Hand Bell Ringing



We are still in the Holiday Period and it is not always possible to get a full turnout – but we soldier on!! *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 September Meeting we had a talk by Harold Pleasance who was a prisoner-of-war under the Japanese and is one of the few survivors still alive. Remarkably, this was the first time he had spoken in public about his experiences. He was conscripted in January 1940 into the Territorial Army and then the Artillery. In October 1941 they landed in Singapore but, with Japanese planes flying overhead, had to leave most of their equipment behind. Singapore was inadequately defended and capitulated in February 1942. Harold was imprisoned in Changi Jail for some time then in October 1942 was sent to Thailand to build a railway from there to Burma. They built a wooden bridge over the River Kwai and then a cast iron one. Amidst all the horrors (men were taken from their sick-beds to make up numbers), Harold remembered the beauty of the jungle – flowers, kingfishers and crickets. The local Javanese showed them how to scavenge for food including snakes.

In the 3 ½ years Harold was a prisoner his family received only one card to indicate he was still alive. When he eventually returned to England he weighed under 7 stone. His girl-friend had waited for him and eventually they married.

Many of us had read accounts of life in the camps – such as Russell Brandon in ‘The Naked Island’ – but it was particularly affecting to hear the story of someone who was there.

At our meeting on 10th October, Norma Hampson is going to talk about the history of Stratford Cemetery.

Sheela Burchill

“Lets Talk” Discussion Group



This group has changed its name to “Discussion Group” – please see entry above

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



We met at Sylvia's on the 9th September. We read "Magritte" by Tom Stoppard. A comedy, so funny we did enjoy it. Next Play Reading is on the 7th October, venue to decide. Ring Sylvia Crooks.

Sylvia Crooks

Poetry and Prose Reading Group



We had three poets for discussion at our September meeting, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling and Ogden Nash, all very different in era's and in style as you would expect. Examples of the poems were, The Ballad of Reading Gael, Easter Day and Harlotts House, Oscar Wilde. The Storm Cone , The Secret of the Machines and The Truce of the Bear, Kipling, and Song to be Song, Seagull and Eagle and The Purest by Ogden Nash, to name just a selection from the afternoon's study.

Ann Davies

Reading Group – Wednesday



In September we chose Joanna Trollope as our author of the month, each of us reading a different novel. Two of the books had been written since her move from Gloucestershire to London but only one reflected a change in style from "Aga Sagas".

Friday Nights is about a reading group of six female friends of different ages and circumstances with one common need: the warmth and support of their Friday nights. When a man joins, the dynamics of the group relationships alter and the novel describes how each one moves on. Her latest novel, Daughters in Law, is written more in the style of her previous books, including The Rector's Wife, The best of Friends, A Village Affair, Marrying the Mistress and Other People's Children.

It was agreed that her books are easy to read and the various relationships show compassion and understanding. A skilful writer with a light touch of humour touching on situations that occur to families in all walks of life.

Sandra Whiteley

Reading Group - Friday



We met to discuss two books this month. The first was The Courtesan's Revenge by Harriet Wilson. We all agreed that this was a very boring book and was just a list of the tiresome men that the Courtesan had slept with. Not one to recommend. The next book was The Purple Hibiscus by Chimamada Ngozi Adichie. This was a story about a violently abusive father and the effect this had on his family. It is set in Nigeria against the background of the breakdown of law and order in the country. It is this writer's first book and is very well written and although we were all appalled at the awful things that the father did we agreed that we had to read it to the end. This book is recommended.

Coral Bradley

Rock & Roll Group



We met and just had a free for all. There wasn't a set programme we just picked anything that we wanted to listen to. A bit like being teenagers again and hanging out with your friends. We will be back to normal next month and welcome anyone else who would like to join us on the second Thursday of the month 2.00 – 4.00.

Coral Bradley

Science & Nature Group



On the 9th of September we visited the Avery Weight - Tranix headquarters home of The Avery Scales Historical Museum. It is on the historic site known for 200 years as the Soho Foundry in Smethwick. We were shown around the site and the private museum by the curator, Andrew Lound, who gave an entertaining and incredibly informative tour. The museum houses one of the finest collections of weighing artefacts in the world showing the development of weighing over 6000 years. Weights and measures are one of mans greatest inventions. Trade and commerce would not have progressed beyond the barter system without them. After the tour we went to the Soho Tavern for lunch.

- October 14th Museum of the Great Western Railway, Swindon
- November 11th Forge Mill Needle Museum

Sandra Sladden

Stratford Swingers Big Band & Jazz Group



Our August meeting was presented by Barry Burleton and his opening number was "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" played by the Nat Adderley Quintet. This was followed by Oscar Peterson playing "Got the World on a String". Artists Eddie Davis, Chris Barber, Gerry Mulligan, Stan Getz, Chris Logue and others followed until the Quincy Jones Orchestra took us to the tea interval with "Moanin'". After a chatty tea interval Dave Brubeck played "Unsquare Dance" and artists Charlie Barnet, Carmen McRae, Erroll Garner and others entertained us, until the Count Basie Orchestra playing "The Kid from Redbank" played us to the end of the meeting. Barry with his extensive knowledge of swing and jazz coupled with his good sense of humour, ensured that we had a very enjoyable and informative meeting.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 27th October 2011 at 2pm to 4pm 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. Menus & payment instructions will be published in the November Newsletter"

Sunday Lunch Group

Dates for your diary:



- Sunday 2 October; Kings Court Hotel, Alcester
- Sunday 6 November; Le Bistrot Pierre, Stratford-upon-Avon
- Sunday 4 December; Henley Golf Club

There will be no more Sunday lunches until February 2012

Brian Bradley

Our next visit to the Symphony Hall is a Matinee on Thursday October 20th.



The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Vassily Sinaisky
Piano: Nareh Arghamanyan

The cost of the visit is £26. - this includes the coach and matinee performance.
We will leave Henley at 12.00 and Stratford Leisure Centre at 12.30.

Please sign up at the meeting or phone Gwyn Bevins or Dorothy Jones.

Please send cheques to Dorothy Jones.

Theatre Group



The tickets for the Holly & The Ivy have almost all gone. As I write there are only four left at a cost of £28.00. This is to go to Malvern on 3 December 2011. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and The Leisure Centre at 12.30.

The other play that we are taking names and money for is Nora – an updated version of Ibsen's The Dolls House – at the Belgrade in Coventry on 18 February 2012. Leaving Henley at 12.00 and the Leisure Centre at 12.30. There are only nine tickets left for this play at the cost is £22.00.

Coral Bradley

Walking Group



The next walk will take place on Wednesday 12th October 2011 at 10.am. Prompt and start from the Greenway Stratford upon Avon - where we can also park. This walk is just over five miles but it is a very easy and will be led by Kathy Bird I recommend good walking shoes and also bring a drink with you. Look forward to seeing you.

Valerie Redfern

THE PARTY

It was great to see our guests and so many members. Thank you all for creating such a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Also thanks to the committee for transforming the hall, moving furniture, setting tables and making sandwiches Chris Heaps and members of the Cook's club were asked to cater for 100-----This figure grew to 148! Chris and team performed miracles in the kitchen and served us all with sandwiches and delicious home-made cakes. Many Thanks! Hopefully everyone went home with a smile and a piece of Birthday cake. We look forward to our 21st.

Dorothy Jones

PS. the Committee and everyone want to thank Dorothy, David and the other members of the Party Sub-Committee who worked so hard and did such a wonderful job organising the event. It is a tribute to their efforts that it all went so smoothly. Thanks Dorothy"

Aline Cumming

Recipe for Gluten Free Venetian Carrot Cake.

Please go to BBC.co.uk/food & put in the recipe finder box **Nigella Lawson** & go to her page 7 & there you will find, almost at the end **Gluten free Venetian Carrot Cake.**"

Athena Roderick.

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

- **Stratford – 26th October – "Little known Warwickshire" - A. W. Winterburn.**
- **Shotton – 1st November – "Metal Sculptures" - Rachel Higgins.**
- **DeneValley – 11th October – "Cities on the Silk Road" - Janet Courtney.**

Group Leaders Contact List		
Group	Group Leader	Usual Meeting date (Monthly)
Art Appreciation	Phyl Collins Pat Wood	3 rd Friday 2pm
Big Band Music & Jazz	Dennis Sully	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.

October – Choir.

November – History Group.

December – Pilates Group