

AYLESBURY VALE U.3.A.



Issue No 83

June 2017

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMEN

Summer is here again, and how quickly the seasons change. Firstly may we offer a huge welcome to our new members, who were Associates. You have a wide variety of talent and energy in your midst, and we hope you enjoy investing it in our U3A. Planning and starting new interest groups and activities on a regular basis, or arranging individual events are really appreciated by all.

At present, we need to find members for the following committee positions:-

Outings – to replace Ian and Gay Hancock

Vice Chairman –to replace Jean Ashton

Lynne will be stepping down from the role of Joint Chairman and Greig is willing to stay on for another year, unless someone comes forward to fill his role in October. Please consider these roles and don't wait to be asked. We were pleased to hear that a lady has come forward to take over as the Social Events Coordinator from Maxine, so thank you to her. Being on the committee is very interesting and you gain an insight into how all the sections work together to make decisions and improve our U3A. All ideas are considered jointly and fresh faces are very welcome.

We have purchased a new portable projector for presentations within groups. It can be linked to a computer for You-tube downloads, PowerPoint presentations and DVD viewing etc. We hope that most of the group leaders can make use of it.

Our new Group Co-ordinator, Jackie Rickard, led a Group Leaders meeting in April, which was very informative and gave the Leaders a chance to air issues and share ideas. The coffee and cake, organised by our stalwart Dot Simmons and her team, was greatly appreciated. The Camping and Caravan group is ready for its first trip to Kidderminster, followed by trips to Cheddar, Canterbury and Southwold and we can't wait to enjoy the camaraderie and fun together.

Finally, we hope you all have some enjoyable times in the coming months whatever you are planning.

Lynne and Greig

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS:



A NEW GARDEN GROUP 2017

Christine Reading and Barbara Fraser have restarted the garden group. It now meets on the 4th Friday of the month at Meadowcroft Community centre if we are having an indoor meeting. If we are going on a local outing we will either congregate at Jansel Square, Bedgrove, near Martins newsagents in order to share transport, or alternatively at the chosen venue if preferred. We started our first visit in April and will continue monthly through the summer (no visit in August).

There is one coach outing arranged for this year in July as outlined below.

PROGRAMME FOR 2017

The first visits, to Askett House and to Waddesdon Manor have already taken place, but there are more to come! .

Friday June 23rd: Preston Bissett Nursery for talk and demonstration includes refreshments . cost £4
Meet at 1-30pm for 1-45 departure from Bedgrove.

Friday July 28th: All day coach trip to Nymans House and garden including guided tour around garden NT. Refreshments available. Leave Jansel Square lay-by at 9am. Cost around £18-00 for NT members.



Christine Reading

The Third Age Trust Website

If you have access to a computer, do you ever go on to the Third Age Website www.u3a.org.uk ? If you are familiar with this site you probably have become registered and can use the Members Only pages. If not I would strongly recommend that you do register especially if you are a Group Leader, for this gives you access to the Resource Centre and the publications and material you can borrow free of charge. You can also get the information on events around the Regions, not only that but help from National Co-ordinators and much more.

Geoff Young



Maxine Robinson has asked us to thank all those U3A members who contributed to her coffee morning held in aid of the Prostate Cancer Charity. Members were generous with donations of books and goods for sale, by baking cakes and by turning up to support the event and spend their money. She has now been able to send off a cheque for £766.95.

SPANISH GROUP'S VISIT TO MALAGA:

The Spanish group has been going strong since May and members have found it a very sociable and pleasant way of spending their Tuesday afternoons. For Christmas, we had an enjoyable evening in the tapas bar in Wendover {heartily recommended} where someone suggested it was about time we undertook a study visit. By noon the next day we had reserved a large apartment overlooking Malaga's largest square and chosen convenient flights. Seven of us travelled out from 9th to 12th March and it was an unparalleled success. Firstly, the weather! Not just fine but actually scorching hot at times. Then there was the delicious local food, the friendly atmosphere and the wealth of things to do and to see. We made the most of our city bus tour tickets, had a walking tour for an hour, took a boat trip, visited art galleries and archaeological sites, visited the fortress high above the city, went to the beach, ate very well indeed and some of us caught a flamenco recital. It was a relaxing few days, easy to arrange and a great chance to absorb the genuine sounds and cadences.



Sheila Page



The picture above shows the group safely ashore after the boat trip around the harbour, and on the right enjoying a very civilised lunch!

Both photos from Chris Rosentall

SPEAKERS CORNER:

WEDNESDAY 12th JULY: DR. ANTHONY KNIGHT— THE DISCOVERY OF INSULIN



Dr Knight served as Consultant Physician with special responsibility for Diabetes from 1974 to 2005 at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. His talk will define what Diabetes is and consider the struggle for survival in the years before insulin and the frantic search for treatment and finally the discovery of Insulin.

WEDNESDAY 13th SEPTEMBER: JAMES MITCHELL - OPERA DISASTERS CONTINUED

James Mitchell a retired Opera singer shares anecdotes and funny stories from the time when he sang professionally. James has performed for us twice before and members have enjoyed his amusing presentations. We look forward to him entertaining us again.

Joe Southall



Keeping your Directory up to date. Please amend the Membership Secretary's email address on Page 2 of the Directory—(Officers and Committee) it should read Members@avu3a.org.uk not Membership

New Members: Although we usually welcome any new members in each issue, there have been none since the last newsletter. Most potential new members may be waiting until May, when they can get a reduced annual subscription and can join for £15 for 15 months. And please remember to send a stamped self addressed envelope if renewing your membership by post.

Associate Members: The committee has now decided to discontinue this classification. After a trial period of three months, it became become apparent that even when Associates were in attendance at the monthly meeting, the hall could comfortably hold the numbers, it follows that the membership fee will now be £15 for all members.

Theatre Group: We miss the opportunity of attending theatre performances not only with friends, but at group discounted rates. Is there anybody out there who would like to restart this group? It may only apply to local theatres with no transport bookings involved, or you could look wider !

Next Christmas Meeting: Plans are already underway for the this years Christmas Extravaganza which will once again be guided by Sheila Satterthwaite at the helm. All budding thespians should get their names down now !

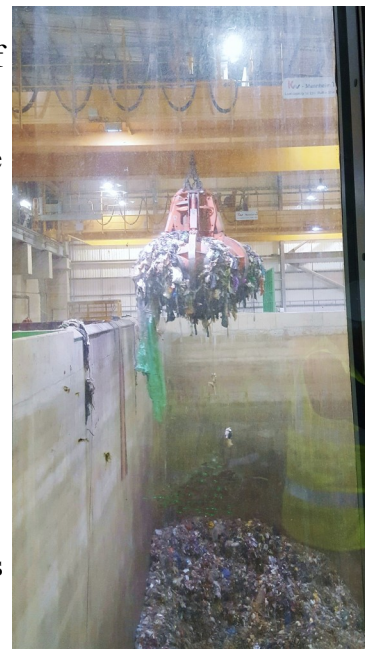
ENERGY FROM WASTE : OUR VISIT TO GREATMOOR.

When Roy Knight had the brilliant idea of organising a visit to the 'Energy from Waste' facility in Greatmoor near Calvert, he hoped that he would be able to raise a group of about 15 people. To his amazement some 45 names appeared on the notice within minutes of it being pinned up at the monthly meeting.

Construction on the site began in September 2013 and it has been full operational since July 2016. It now treats up to 300,000 tonnes of residual household and commercial waste each year; to you and me that means the contents of our non recyclable green bins taken in daily by 75 wagons. That is used to produce 22 megawatts of electricity -sufficient to meet the energy needs of up to 36,000 homes. The project belongs to Bucks County Council and is expected to cover its costs in 30 years time. While the statistics are mind boggling, you really have to visit the site to be able to glimpse the enormity of the operation.

We began our visit with refreshments in the Visitor Centre where Education Officer Jez Elkin made sure that we understood the health and safety issues as we would be seeing some of the working areas of the plant. We had all been told to wear trousers and long sleeves, but we were then kitted out in steel capped boots, a hard hat, a high viz overall, gloves and safety glasses. The photos overleaf will show members modelling these attractive outfits! Then we were off along many narrow walkways and short flights of steps - quite tricky if you didn't like looking down at the floor that you could see far down below! We visited the control room and were quite amazed to see just one man sitting at his computer and two more operating the waste bunker where a constant stream of lorries tipped out the contents of our own green bins amongst thousands of others. The vast grab cranes performed a weird sort of dance as they lifted the rubbish and moved it on to the first stages of its long journey. I am sure that the two operators were well used to the comments about the comparison with those seaside amusement arcade games where you try in vain to lift a teddy bear or plastic toy with a tinier version of their giant cranes. We proceeded for what seemed miles to see various turbines and condenser fans not to mention the actual fiery furnace where the waste is burned at phenomenally high temperatures. I hasten to add that we were safely behind a sturdy viewing window for this latter procedure.

It was a very informative and unique visit and our thanks go to Roy Knight who took the initiative to encourage other members to see what he felt might be of general interest. Just imagine the difference we could all make to the U3A programme if we noted something which we thought might be of interest to other members. That, of course, is the way in which the 'Out and About' Group has always worked, and perhaps we could all take a leaf out of their book and share ideas about worthwhile visits and activities.



Dot Toler managed to take this photo. of the giant cranes moving the rubbish on to its next stage through a rather dusty viewing window.

Shirley Stokes

OUR FASCINATING VISIT TO THE GREATMOOR 'ENERGY FROM WASTE' FACILITY:



All kitted up for the tour! And below

In case of emergency

Both photos by Richard Clark



Cars parked facing outwards as requested—for a quick getaway in case of emergency. (Thankfully no emergency arose !)

This photo and the one below by courtesy of Tony Poth.



SOUTH EAST FORUM:

Many of you will be used to me talking about the Thames Valley Network and the Study



Concentration at a T.V.N. meeting!

Days they put on but now I want to talk about the events that the South East Region arrange. As you may know we are part of that along with about 120 other U3As. It is the largest of the Regions and like the TVN encourages groups to organise events open to all in the Region. Up until now these events have not been made common knowledge, except for those who trawl the U3A website. Our representative on the Third Age Trust, Hilvary Robinson has now forwarded some notices of forthcoming events around the South East.

First; the South East Forum Annual Conference on Wednesday 10th May at East Grinstead 9.30 to 15.30. This is one of the events that is funded by the Third Age trust.

Next, the Summer School, from Monday 19th to Thursday 22nd at Chichester University. The cost for this is en-suite £315. Standard accommodation £285. Non residential with evening meal £195. Non residential without meals £145.

Finally S E Region Research Group on 5th July at the Royal Holloway College TW20 0EX. 10.30 to 16.30. Cost £5.00.

For those of you who are able you can get all this information and more by going to <https://u3asites.org.uk/south-east/events> For those who do not have access to a computer ask a friend or contact me and I will try to give you the information you want. I have put the details of these events on the notice board.

Geoff Young.

READERS CIRCLE 2 says a big 'thank you' to all who bought books from our stall at the May meeting. Considering the books were mainly 50p with a few hardbacks at £1 and the raffle was also 50p we did very well to make a total of £78.50 which we rounded up to £80. We have sent a cheque for this amount to the Prostate Cancer Charity.

Hopefully, you all enjoyed the books you bought and also those who won the raffle prizes enjoyed them too. This year the free bookmarks didn't go as well as the mini chocolate eggs. That's life! Again, our very many thanks to you all.



Brenda Daniel— Group Leader



From a recent visit; Tony & Annette Ashpool looking round the coal gallery at Audley End House. This is unique amongst the houses in the U.K. Coal was hauled by hoist up to the top floor and stored in bunkers, so making it easier for housemaids to carry it to the bedrooms.

Both photos from Gay Hancock

John & Sheena Swinburne braving the icy weather by the very unusual box and yew hedge at Audley End.



TRUSTED TRADESPEOPLE:

We wonder how many of you have noticed this heading tucked away between 'Transport' and 'Ukulele' in your Directory. It aims to assist members seeking a reliable tradesman by passing on contacts who have found just that. Sheila Sylvester has kept a list of recommendations for several years, and is now ready for a change,. Are you good at keeping records up to date on your computer? If so, you might like to take this task on. At the same time you are reminded that it is the responsibility of all members to pass on useful information, and for all users to give useful feedback. If the list is not of any use because it is out of date and the tradespeople in question may have moved away or retired, the record keeper needs to know.



So the ball is in your court. If you feel that the information is worth keeping—act now. Form a queue of volunteers in front of any committee member!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



WEDNESDAY 19th JULY: Join fellow members at the Broad Leys P.H. for morning coffee or tea and biscuits and an opportunity for a friendly chat and exchange of views. We meet at 10.30 a.m. and the cost is only £2

WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER : £2 for a morning of convivial chat with fellow members, not forgetting the coffee and biscuits! Come to the Broad Leys PH and join us at 10.30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY 15th NOVEMBER: Don't forget to come to our coffee morning—a pleasant way to join another U3A activity. As always 10.30 a.m. at the Broad Leys P.H. and only £2

SUNDAY 27th AUGUST: The Chiltern U3A Jazz Appreciation Group invite you to their 'Summer Jazzfest 2017' at Drake Hall, Amersham Community Centre 7 pm. To 10.45p.m. Ticket Entrance only at £15. Take your own food and drink if you wish, Licensed Bar available.



AN EXCITING EXTRA OUTING FOR YOUR PLEASURE

WEDNESDAY 23RD AUGUST : HALF DAY RIVER TRIP WITH TEA.

We drive to Folly Bridge in Oxford and board our private boat for a two-hour river cruise to Abingdon, and a delicious afternoon tea in the Crown and Thistle Hotel.



Cost £47pp. (Afternoon tea is included) Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 12.15. return 6.00pm approx.



A REMINDER FROM GAY AND IAN OF OUTINGS STILL TO COME!

TUESDAY 18th JULY: TWO NATIONAL TRUST HOUSES IN KENT - KNOLE & IGHTHAM MOTE

Originally an archbishop's palace, Knole passed through royal hands in 1603 to the Sackville family, who still own part of it today. The house is undergoing massive conservation and restoration and new areas are being opened to the public every year. We spend the morning here and you will have a chance to buy lunch in the newly refurbished café. Seven miles away is Ightham Mote, a medieval moated manor house which carries you through 700 years of history. It is not a 'show home' for one period of time but a living 'blog' highlighting the changing fashion and needs of its owners. There will be time for tea here before we leave for home. Dept. Jansel Square 8. 00 a.m. Home by 7. 00 p.m.. Cost: £21 plus entrance fees Knole £10. 65 and I.M. £10 if not N.T. members

WEDNESDAY 9th AUGUST: ELY AND ANGLESEY ABBEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Ely has one of England's largest and most beautiful cathedrals, and it is home to the only national museum dedicated to stained glass. You can also visit Oliver Cromwell's house and explore Ely's lovely waterside area, which is an attraction in itself. We spend the morning here, with time for lunch.



In the afternoon we call in at Anglesey Abbey, which is primarily noted for its spectacular gardens. The most visited are the rose and dahlia gardens which should be at their best in August. You can also visit the watermill and the house, a converted priory filled with fine furnishings, books, paintings, silver and rare clocks

Cost £19 approx. Admission to Anglesey Abbey £11. 90 for non National Trust members. Dept. Jansel Square 8. 00 a.m. Return approx. 7. 00p.m.

THURSDAY 7th SEPTEMBER: WOBURN ABBEY AND SAFARI PARK

The Abbey has belonged to the Bedfords for 400 years. There are 22 rooms to discover with over 250 works of art, a unique grotto, the State Apartments, the Chinese Room with its decorative wallpaper, and underground vaults containing a huge gold and silver collection. We spend the morning here exploring the house and lovely gardens, with time for coffee and lunch.

In the afternoon we take a drive round the Safari Park with a guide on board to tell us all about the animals. Afterwards there will be time to see the smaller animals on foot and/or to relax in the tea room before we come home.

Cost £42 pp. Includes all tickets and safari guide, but no meals. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 9.30. a.m. return 5.30 pm approx.

TUESDAY 3rd OCTOBER: GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER STEAM RAILWAY AND SUDELEY CASTLE.

We board the train at Cheltenham racecourse for a 25-minute ride to Winchcombe, passing through some beautiful Cotswold scenery on the way. We then take a short drive to Sudeley Castle for coffee and a short introductory talk while we drink, before we go off to explore.

Sudeley castle was built in the 15th century and is one of the few castles that is still a residence. (It has a long history of royal owners and visitors. Katherine Parr lived and died here and is buried in the Chapel). The castle rooms contain many fascinating treasures from Roman times to the present day. The pheasantry houses rare birds from around the world and it is all surrounded by ten award-winning gardens. We spend the rest of the day here, and you can eat in the restaurant or bring your own food if you prefer. Cost £41 includes train fare, castle entry, coffee on arrival and an introductory talk (but no meals). Depart Jansel Square at 8.00 a.m, return 6.45 p.m. approx.



Thanks to Tony Poth and others we always have some delightful photographs taken on the London Walks. Our capital city has some beautiful areas which have been thoroughly explored by this group.



Exploring Kynance Mews one of many mews in this area of Kensington and below

Our London Walkers in the Kyoto Japanese gardens in Holland Park.

Tony tells us that the flowers and shrubs were at their absolute best for this walk.





Will June Watts be our first Aylesbury Vale member in space ?

Taken at the National Space Centre in Leicester by Moira Bishop

Still in Leicester, Richard Clark took this photograph of the nose cone of the British Blue Streak rocket. It was used as the first stage of Europe's first launch system. France and Germany provided the second and third stages as the British Government pulled out of the project in 1972.



Last date for copy for the September Newsletter will be August 18th so please send any items you may like to share with us to Shirley Stokes on treveris9@btinternet.com or by post to 9 Windsor Road, Aylesbury HP21 7JG. Telephone 01296 392726

Thanks as always to all of you who contribute to the finished product, and who forgive me for my errors! Please continue to send in news of your activities within the U3A and for any other items which you feel might interest our readers. Photographs are also very welcome.

Don't forget to look at our website where you will find details of all our events and activities and more photographs—in colour too. — avu3a.org.uk