

AYLESBURY VALE U.3.A.



Issue No. 78

March 2016

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMEN:

Now that we are into the New Year and looking forward to the Spring, we hope you survived the festive season unscathed.

Our joint chairmanship seems to be working for us, and we hope it is for you. This makes us believe that a joint approach could work for other roles, in particular that of Secretary, a post that needs to be filled by October.

We have had the opportunity to look at the activities of other U3A's and have noticed that some have such interests as Health and Fitness, and various music groups. There is one group named Singing for the Terrified, which sounds fun! Other ideas suggested to us have varied from sports interest to furniture restoration and the committee is open to any suggestions for development. We are pleased to see that computer programming and military history groups have started recently.

We would like to think our U3A is continually expanding and improving, so we would particularly would like to encourage newer members to see what they can offer, and remind them that there is plenty of help available, both locally and nationally, when it comes to starting groups.

Finally we would like to thank everyone who attended and contributed to the Charity Burns Night, where £1150 was raised for Young Carers in the area.



Lynne and Greig



NEWS FROM GROUPS OLD AND NEW:

THEATRE GROUP:



Pattie Smith has run this thriving group for the last three years and unfortunately will be retiring from the role in July. If you are interested in taking it on there is an opportunity for you to work alongside Pattie as her Deputy until July, with a view to taking over later. Of course, this is a responsibility which can be shared by two people. Please contact Pattie if you are interested (details on the AVU3A website or in the Directory).

GARDENING GROUP:



It was a very sad day when our thriving gardening Group disbanded as the joint leaders had to give up their role. Given its popularity, why don't we try to start up a new group? This does not need to be a large one, nor use the same format as the last one—for example, a neighbouring U3A has two groups. The first is a small group meeting in members homes in the summer to look around the hosts garden sharing cuttings and tips etc. The second goes on summer outings to various garden venues. If one of our members, or a small group, would like to try to set up such a group please contact Hazel Burgess, Groups Coordinator at: Groups@avu3a.org.uk

DISCOVERING DISHES:

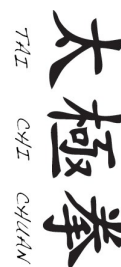


Discovering Dishes our exciting and friendly cookery group has 2 vacancies for new members. We meet on the fourth Monday of the month in each other's homes. This is the opportunity to glean different recipes; test out your own new ideas; have a tasty lunch and make good friends.

If you are interested in joining us please contact Bobby Cadwallader

TAI CHI CHUAN

Please note that Joan Lewis, the Group Leader, is moving house and can now be contacted at her new address: details in the printed newsletter



MONEY FOR MUNCHKINS !

Although it seems a very long time ago now, we want to thank everyone for making a generous donation to fund some Christmas 'extras' for the children in the Playgroup which meets next door in the small hall. We were able to hand over the sum of £236 which they used once again to hire the Booster Cushion Theatre Company who presented their own version of 'Goldilocks' with the help of some very excited children. The Leader has asked me to pass on her grateful thanks for the money which makes such a difference to their programme at Christmas.



Shirley Stokes

P.S. When I called in to ask how their Christmas Celebrations had gone the children launched themselves at me—they thought I must be 'magic' as I had come through that door from the other room which they are not allowed to go through !

CALLING ALL GROUP LEADERS:

The annual Group Leaders Meeting is pencilled in the diary for Wednesday 20th April from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon at the Bowls Club in Wendover Road, Aylesbury. Please put this provisional date in your diary and we will confirm as soon as possible.



This is an opportunity for all Group Leaders to socialise with others and to enjoy morning coffee and cake. If you are unable to come please send a deputy.

Hazel Burgess



Val Young—our 'Card lady' has asked me to remind you that a card from U3A friends can mean a great deal to someone who is not well, in hospital or sadly has been bereaved. Please let her know if you have news of anyone who might need cheering up and she will send the appropriate card from all of us.

She can't do it without you, so please contact her if you hear anything.

DON'T FORGET THE THAMES VALLEY NETWORK.

The Thames Valley Network (TVN) is a grouping of U3As in Berks, Bucks & Oxon plus Swindon which is in Wiltshire. The idea is to exchange events and study days on subjects which would not necessarily have sufficient interest in a single U3A but collectively a reasonable number of members get involved. There are now 40 U3As in the network and study days are organised by a committee of members with some events rolling on from one year to the next.



There is a comprehensive list of dates and activities displayed on the notice board at the monthly meeting and this can also be found on the TVN website at www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk All the up to date information regarding future activities may be found there.



ANOTHER LONDON WALK:

A recent walk along the banks of the Thames at East Rotherhithe took us from Canada Water to Greenwich. We returned via the Greenwich Foot Tunnel (shown here) to the north side of the Thames so that we could catch the DLR at Island Gardens.

Peter Harding

YOUR U3A STILL NEEDS YOU

For the coming year we are in need of a Secretary, Social Secretary, Speakers Secretary and Membership Secretary as those serving stand down at the A.G.M. in October 2016.

Rest assured that you will not be left to just 'get on with it' as you will be guided through the role by those standing down. Also there is the current committee and plenty of ex-committee members to give you all the support you may need to get started, and if any problems arise.

Please give it some serious thought, and if you could do the job; would be prepared to do it jointly with a friend; or would just like to find more of what it entails; please contact Meryll Coe

**APPLY
HERE**

The Photography Group:

Members of our photography Group recently visited the Tring Natural History Museum to view the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition which they found very disappointing as it was simply a 'taster' for the London NHM event. In previous years Tring has hosted the full exhibition. However they made up for their disappointment with a quick visit to College Lake followed by lunch at The Crows Nest!



Photos from Ron Adams



S TOP PRESS: BRAND NEW SOUNDS OF THE 60'S GROUP

We can now tell you that the new group will meet at the Tennis and Squash Club, Wendover Road, on the following Tuesday afternoons at 14.00: 23RD February; 22nd March and 19th April.



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW MEMBERS

Andy Walker, David Pearce, David Stevens, Hanlie and Gerhard Croeser, Jill Perks, Andy and Sandra Carter, Julie Hares, and Brian Morgan.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BOWLS GROUP COMPETITIONS.

Mary Rogers writes that although we may have thought we had seen the last of her in print she came across these notes when preparing to hand the reins over to Elinor Paterson. She thought newer members might be interested to hear how the Bowls Group came about!

Although the group started in 1989 it wasn't until 1994 that we became more competitive and decided to introduce two competitions. Both were played as mixed Pairs one of which was to be played and completed on one day but for the second we drew for partners and then similar to the football league we played the pair drawn against us with the winning pair proceeding to the next round, players arranging their own dates on which to play.

It was after the death of Eric Dorrance who had not only founded and been the first Chairman of our U3A but had also persuaded me to start a Bowls Group and had been an extremely keen and active member that we named the one day game the Dorrance Trophy.

We didn't have any actual trophies at this stage but had framed Certificates beautifully inscribed by Terry Ford a member of the U3A and also a talented artist. In 1999 I was given a very early wooden Bowl that I think must have been the type used by Drake and certainly wouldn't have been seen on any Greens in our lifetime. Bill Scutt a member of the group was a keen wood worker and he not only mounted this Bowl on a wooden plinth but also gave us a smaller trophy of a statue of a bowler so of course this then became the Scutt Trophy and used for the other competition.



Both competitions were played in this format until 2001 until it became too difficult to find dates on which all the entrants could agree and manage to play their games for the Scutt Trophy before the end of the season so we then just had the Dorrance competition. However in 2005 we revived the Scutt to be played on one pre arranged morning as an American Spoon Drive with just one person taking the prize. This has been very popular and until this year has always produced a clear winner, 2015 was to be proved different and we had 3 players with the same score. This was resolved by the three having to play a tie breaker – two extra ends then gave us the one winner.

KEEPING YOU AND YOUR COMPUTER SAFE:

The Metropolitan Police have issued a new edition of their 'Little Book of Big Scams'. A copy can be downloaded from http://www.met.police.uk/docs/little_book_scam.pdf, or obtained by telephoning 020 7230 1228.

You can also find very useful information on many aspects of your security from unwanted telephone calls to buying on line from this site:

www.getsafeonline.org



MEET RON ADAMS:

Many of you will already know member Ron Adams. In a previous life we met him in the now defunct Butchers shop in Cambridge Street, or you may have seen him dressed as Father Christmas for the Hospice Charity. But just lately his name has been cropping up quite regularly in the media, so we thought we would like to acknowledge his many talents! His photos have been published in the Bucks. Herald; Mail on Sunday; (and the Mail Calendar); You Magazine; the Meningitis Trust Calendar; Amateur Photographer; BBC website; BBC South Today Weather; Calendar Club; Aylesbury Calendar; and the U3A South East Region website. (And of course he takes the photos of our own U3A Committee members and Group Leaders which, we hope, help you to identify people in our crowded monthly meeting!)

If you would like to see more of Ron's excellent photos. you can find 7000 on the flickr photo-sharing site [flickr.com/photos/dlanorsmada](https://www.flickr.com/photos/dlanorsmada). .



Castle Street Aylesbury



Taken in Thame



Members boarding the Eirly (snowdrop to you) on the Llangollen canal on a Welsh Study Visit



An unusual view of Aylesbury's latest University Campus building

This is just a small selection of photographs—you could spend many happy hours investigating the others!

“HE WHO TIRES OF LONDON TIRES OF LIFE.” THUS SPAKE DR. JOHNSON.

Members of the Exploring London Walks Group might share the view of the venerable Doctor, but January may not be the best time to explore London on foot. Instead, London must come to us! To this end, our leader Peter Harding, ably assisted by Tony Poth, organised a well-attended and most enjoyable photographic review of 2015 London Walks. 31 of us met in Quainton Village Hall on a Friday morning in January. Acquaintances were renewed, coffee and excellent cake (supplied by the village pub) were consumed, and we were treated to a sequence of photographs which provided much to talk about and rekindled happy memories.

Seven London Walks were completed in 2015 – to Bankside, The City, Notting Hill, Highgate, Lambeth and Vauxhall, East Rotherhithe and Mayfair. From a pool of almost 2,000 photographs, about 70 had been selected to remind us of the remarkably wide range of places we had visited. We were prompted to recall Bankside on a dark, wet February day with the view of St. Paul’s over the Millennium Bridge. We remembered our amusement at the “Tickle Me” car outside the Tate Modern. We renewed our acquaintance with the striking murals and the markets in Portobello Road, followed by the mansions of Notting Hill. We stood again in front of the Karl Marx memorial in Highgate Cemetery, and we remembered our surprise at seeing an urban fox sunbathing on a tombstone. We recalled our leader singing the opening lines of a Dusty Springfield song near her former residence on Camden Hill, and a member of the group reciting poetry outside the house where Samuel Taylor Coleridge once lived. We remembered how we were often struck by the contrast between old and new London, exemplified by the City skyline of modern glass office blocks surrounding ancient churches such as St. Botolph without Aldgate, which survived the Great Fire of London and the Blitz! We strolled again through Mayfair, stopping in Berkeley Square to listen to a recording of “The nightingale sang ...”, and we visited Grosvenor Square with its American memorials and statues. Each walk had its own character and particular sources of interest; we were reminded of this and of how our visits provide a fascinating insight into the buildings and lives of the inhabitants in London over the ages and today.

We are fortunate to live close enough to London to make our visits possible. We are also fortunate to have as our leaders, Peter and Tony, assisted also by Tom Day. They have carried on the much appreciated work of Bill Gibbins whom we were very pleased to see at our meeting in Quainton. We owe a debt of gratitude to these gentlemen who devote much time to planning, researching and leading our walks. Thanks for the memories of 2015. We certainly have not tired of London and we are looking forward to more visits in 2016.



Jim Ferris

Past leaders Pat and Bill Gibbins chat to one of the current walkers Tony Davis

SPEAKERS CORNER

WEDNESDAY 13TH APRIL: ANDY THOMAS—THE CROP CIRCLE MYSTERY.



Andy is a well-known presenter and author on unexplained mysteries, intrigues and cover-ups. With exceptional visual images he will explore the extraordinary phenomenon of crop circles, the intricate shapes that appear in fields around the world each year and still defy full explanation despite media scepticism and much debate. His presentation will cover the history of these mysteries up to the present, and explores both the amazing designs and the many varied and imaginative theories put forward to explain them over the years.

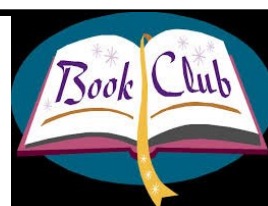
WEDNESDAY 11TH MAY: TONY HADLAND— POP PIRATES OF THE 60'S.

In his talk, Tony traces the story of the offshore pirate radio stations of the 1960's, including "Big L" and Radio Caroline. He explains how restrictions on broadcasting light entertainment existed in the UK from the earliest days of public broadcasting, and shows how, between the two world wars, the first generation of offshore stations were land-based, in Normandy, Luxembourg, and elsewhere. Offshore ship-based broadcasting developed first in Scandinavia in the 1950's, then in Belgium and the Netherlands, before the first British stations went live in the 1960's. The talk will be illuminated by numerous audio clips. Listen out for your favourite !

WEDNESDAY 8TH JUNE: -SUE BENWELL -THE LIFE OF SIR NORMAN WISDOM".

Susan, who is a freelance journalist resident in Aylesbury, is somewhat of an expert on Sir Norman's life, as she has ghost written the biography of Sir Norman's long serving personal assistant, Ann Axe. Sir Norman was one of the UK's most popular comedians, both on the stage and in many memorable comedy films. Sue will take us through his fascinating life, progressing from a very hard early life to eventual stardom.

READERS' CIRCLE 2 DISPLAY TABLE AT APRIL MEETING IN AID OF THE PROSTATE CANCER CHARITY



Our Group will have surplus books for sale at the April monthly meeting so please bring your money with you!! Some of them will be books we have read at our group meetings and some have been donated by other members. We hope these books will provide you with a few hours of entertainment at a really low cost! They have all been previously read and enjoyed. All the money collected will be forwarded direct to The Prostate Cancer Charity to which our Group regularly gives support throughout the year.

We are extremely grateful for all the help you give to this vital Charity. Many thanks.

Brenda Daniel – Leader: Readers' Circle 2



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wednesday 16th March: Members Coffee Morning at the Broad Leys P.H:

Come and join members old and new, associate or full at this popular watering hole on the Wendover Road at 10.30 a.m. to share a coffee and biscuits and find out more about U3A activities. Make new friends too. The cost is only £1.75 and the company is excellent!

Monday 11th April: Visit Sulgrave Manor and Canon's Ashby, Northants.

On arrival at Sulgrave Manor (home to George Washington's ancestors), we have coffee with biscuits or Banbury cakes followed by a guided tour of this fascinating historic house and its garden. At lunch time we head 4 miles down the road to Canon's Ashby (NT), an Elizabethan manor house in beautiful 18th century gardens. We spend the afternoon here. You can buy lunch and/or afternoon tea in the tea room or tea garden, visit the house and shop and stroll round the grounds.

The cost of this trip will be £27 include admission to Sulgrave, refreshments and guided tour. Admission to Canons Ashby will be an extra £8.45 for non N.T. members. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 09.00 return 6.00p.m. approx.

Friday 6th May: Visit to the RHS Spring Festival, Malvern.

An outing for garden lovers. This show is, in the opinion of some, better than Chelsea. There will be stunning show gardens, plants and exhibits by one-of-a-kind specialist nurseries, plants for sale, talks and practical workshops, cookery demonstrations and talks by celebrities.

Cost £39. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 08.00. return 6.30p.m. approx.

Wednesday 18th May: Another Members Coffee Morning.

The same details as on 16th March. Why not come and join us?

Tuesday 7th June: The Thames, Mapledurham House and the Watercress Line.

We start the day with coffee in a hotel by Caversham Bridge in Reading. From there we take our own private 40-minute trip by boat along the Thames to Mapledurham House, where we have a guided tour followed by soup and sandwiches or a ploughman's lunch in their lovely cafe. The coach then takes us on to Alton in Hampshire where we take a steam train on the Watercress Line as far as Alresford, where the coach will pick us up and bring us home. Although this is a long day, there is very little walking and you will enjoy some lovely scenery along the way. The estimated cost will be in the region of £50 but this will include morning coffee, the boat trip, the guided tour of Mapledurham House, lunch and the train fare. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 08.00. return 7.30 approx.



More unmissable dates !

Monday 4th July: Gloucester and Hidcote Garden (NT)

We spend the morning in Gloucester, where there is plenty to see. Apart from the wonderful Cathedral, burial place of Edward II, there are the fascinating Victorian docks, the Soldiers of Gloucestershire museum, the Waterways museum and, for a bit of retail therapy, Gloucester Quays. You could also take a boat trip on the Gloucester and Sharpness canal. In the afternoon we drive to one of Britain's top ten gardens at Hidcote (NT). It comprises of a small series of gardens within a garden and is famous for rare shrubs and trees. Estimated cost £20. Admission to Hidcote £9.45 extra for non-NT members. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 08.00 return 7.00p.m. approx.

Wednesday 20th July: The third of our convivial coffee mornings, again at The Broad Leys at 10.30 a.m.

Wednesday 31st August: Hatfield House.

For those of you who prefer not to travel too far, somewhere nearer home this time. Hatfield House has been in the Cecil family for 400 years and is a Jacobean house with outstanding paintings, furniture, wood carvings and tapestries. Besides the main house, there is also the beautiful historic Old Palace (1485) to see, and four lovely gardens to explore, as well as three walks of varying lengths you can do in the park. The Stable Yard Shops offer you exclusive retailers in a unique location and the Coach House restaurant sells a wide range of delicious high quality food.

Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 0900. return 5.30 approx.

Estimated cost £28. for coach and entrance tickets.

Thursday 22nd September: The Black Country Museum.

Many of you will have been here before, but there is so much to see in this amazing living museum, that a return visit won't go amiss. There are over 50 authentic shops, workshops and houses to explore. You can also take a trip on the tram, visit the underground mine or watch a 1920s silent film in the cinema.

Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 09.00, return 6.00p.m. approx.

Estimated cost £34 for coach and tickets.

Tuesday 18th October: Chatham Historic Dockyard.

A fascinating glimpse into everything nautical and more besides. You can go aboard 3 historic warships and a submarine, experience life as a ropemaker in the Ropery, discover the story of shipbuilding at Chatham, see the largest collection of historic lifeboats in the UK and go to the new "Age of Sail" exhibition. There are collections from the Royal Museums Greenwich and the Imperial War Museum, and there is the chance to go on a walking tour

.....Chatham Historic Dockyard cont.

of the film locations in the dockyard for Sherlock Holmes, Call the Midwife and Mr. Selfridge among many others.

Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 09.00 return 6.30p.m. approx.
Estimated cost £35 for coach, tickets and tour.

For further information, or to share ideas for future outings, contact Gay and Ian Hancock

OUR CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION:

The Chinese New Year of the Monkey started on 8th February and the following weekend the New Year Festivities in London kicked off. They are said to be the largest celebrations outside the Asian continent, and are attended by hundreds of thousands of people who descend on Trafalgar Square to wish each other Xin Nian Kuai Le (Happy New Year in Mandarin) or San Nin Faai Lok (in Cantonese).



Our own U3A celebrations are rather more modest and for the second year running 60 members enjoyed a Chinese meal relishing their Honey BBQ spare ribs, crispy duck with pancakes, 5 spiced beef with leeks etc. etc.

Thanks to Maxine Robinson who once again arranged a highly enjoyable celebration in Fairford Leys.

Last date for copy for the Summer Newsletter will be May 11th 2016 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 But don't wait for the closing date; the Editor likes to receive copy as early as possible so that she knows what spaces are left to be filled!

Thanks are due to our Secretary Peter Gasson for help with the ordering and printing and to Alan Robinson for proof reading and, of course, to all of you who send in articles and photographs.