

## **Picture credits**

### **Front cover**

U3A photography group

### **Inside front cover**

Diana Megson — Art 9 Learn to Draw

### **Inside back cover**

Judy Brown — Calligraphy

### **Back cover**

Marjorie Derges — Calligraphy



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Fleet and District U3A

# **ANNUAL REVIEW 2007–2008**



both in paper form and on the website.

A big thank you to Don Watson who puts in so much work particularly for the holiday trips, to ensure everything goes smoothly, and is always willing to give advice to Brian or myself for the trips we organise. All these trips do not just "happen". There is a lot of work behind the scenes, but it is very rewarding when members enjoy the trips so much.

**Introduction**

Anthony Trice, Group Leaders' Liaison Secretary  
[groups@fleetu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@fleetu3a.org.uk)

Welcome to the Annual Review 2008!

Within these pages you will find contributions from some of the members and Group Leaders of the various activities that form the basis of the Fleet and District U3A programme. Whether you are a new member or are rejoining you will find help with your choice of leisure interest for the coming year.

We have over sixty groups ranging from art to science and technology, family history to walking and dancing to scrabble. Last year saw an expansion into computing topics through our partnership with Calthorpe Park School. For 2008 to 2009 we hope to see further computing based courses available to members through this link.

None of these groups would be possible without the voluntary help and support from nearly sixty Group Leaders, more than thirty Group Secretaries and the helpers and tea makers! I would like to personally thank them all for making such a variety of topics available to the members.

If you cannot find the activity within our programme that would interest you why not consider starting such a group? The Committee and fellow Group Leaders are always willing to offer support and advice. You do not have to be an expert – the ethos of U3A activities is that we all learn from each other through the guiding hand of a Group Leader. My e-mail address is at the top of this page.

On the final page is information on new computer based courses starting next September. Look out for more details at Enrolment in August.

**Walks**

Bill Ralph

We are currently on a January to June walk programme of thirteen varied adventures including -- Odiham, Hartley Witney, Hindhead, Frensham, the Devil's jumps, the Blackwater Valley, Friday Street and a special all day London walk . If each is attended then about 75 miles in total will be covered. Even in poor weather we get an excellent response of between 20 and 40 persons on a walk despite the mud and rain. We are still suffering from a shortage of those willing to lead a walk that means relying on a small loyal band, without them the whole system will collapse. Come and PLEASE "have a go". I will give ample support and guidance

**Finally .....**

Our partnership with Calthorpe Park School will increase next year with PC based group sessions on how to use E-Bay and further Family History on the Internet courses.

In addition those who have attended Lynne Gould's PC for beginners will be able to further their understanding of software such as Word and Excel and put it to practical use with a couple of six week long courses for twelve students starting in September 2008. The sessions will cover Letters, Newsletters, Invitations, Lists, Budget and Accounts and Address labels. The first three sessions concentrating on using Word, and the last three using Excel/Word.



I regret that I am doing the reporting. However on one special occasion Dennis and Karin Parkinson agreed to talk about their amazing collection of mugs obtained on their travels - it was most interesting and a pleasure to sit and listen to somebody else. Thank you very much - and also to Myra who has sat at the receipt of custom so efficiently at every meeting. I am grateful to or all the expressions of appreciation that I have received during the year, your encouragement is a great spur to keep me going!

**Visits**

Barbara Lyons

Trips abroad first! We went to Anney in September 2007, and this was a really successful trip, much enjoyed by all. Anney is a really beautiful place with the lake, mountains and picturesque old town. The weather was sunny and warm and it was lovely just wandering around. In December a party went to Cologne by coach to visit the Christmas markets, and again this was very much enjoyed despite cold stormy weather! This October we have Madrid to look forward to!

The UK short break this year is to Cheshire with several interesting excursions organised and this has been very attractive with a large party of 40 booked.

The day trips have been well supported and we usually set off with a completely full coach. So far we have been to Eton College (for a second trip), The Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton, The Royal Academy, London, a "Legal London" tour around the Inns of Court and Royal Courts of Justice, and the Imperial War Museum, London. Still to come are the Tutankhamun Exhibition, Bowood House, Standen House and Sackville College, and Hever Castle.

We try to provide a varied programme of visits that will appeal to different tastes, and we are always happy to receive suggestions, particularly for day trips. All our bookings are taken at the monthly meetings, and when a new trip is opened for booking this starts at 9.45am. Our list of forthcoming visits is available



**Art Groups**

Introduced by Barry Short

At the last count the Fleet U3A ran some thirteen art groups so you will find that most aspects of drawing and painting are represented somewhere amongst them. There are a few very talented artists whose work regularly graces local galleries but do not be put off. They readily share their skill and are an asset to the majority of us who, like me, struggle to develop our comparatively meagre talent. Additionally, all of us, the good and the not so good, share a common enthusiasm and gain a great deal of personal satisfaction from our efforts. There is a niche for you - even the novice who has hardly held a pencil or a paintbrush, provided you realise it is not easy and you aspire to create. Some people find it daunting to join a new group but they will discover friendly people who share their artistic problems, frustrations and ambitions plus patient leaders who provide guidance and encouragement.

The Matron of Fleet Hospital invited us to hang 14 pictures on the walls of the newly decorated wards and corridors. They are changed regularly so that the members of each group can show their work in turn. U3A Gift Aid gave us money for the frames and the display is admired by everyone. You are welcome to walk round and look - they really look good!

On the last Thursday of June each year we hold our ANNUAL EXHIBITION in the United Reform Hall in Kings Road when all the painters show their work - more than 350 pictures are shown. Everyone is welcome - it is open to the public and you will find it a most friendly event.



### **Art 01 Anyone can paint better**

John Lawes

Second and third year beginners take great delight in actually seeing the progress made week by week. Few of us would have believed we could achieve the results we have in such a short time and are inspired to keep improving in the years ahead.

### **Art 02 Acrylics**

John Scarborough.

We meet on Monday afternoons in the Fleet Football Clubroom. This suggests we ought to form our own Soccer team as the pitch is next door, Perhaps Acrylics United. But although we're a happy team with an aim to improve, our art is very individual and varied, and freedom to experiment is encouraged. We also learn from each other and welcome comments on our work

Although we all enjoy our painting, the two hours of social chitchat have produced a close bond amongst us all and friendships are being forged. All in all, a most enjoyable afternoon!

### **Art 03 Watercolour improvers**

M Chapman

Our group has spent another happy year hopefully improving our watercolour skills as the title suggests! We work together as a friendly supportive group mostly using watercolour but some of the group occasionally try a different medium. Most of the time each individual chooses their own subject for painting but we have had some excellent demonstrations from visiting artists. We can always rely on the members of the group to give helpful advice suggestions and gentle criticism. Halfway through the year we changed venue and an average of ten of us are now enjoying a warm brighter room in Basingbourne Road.

### **Tai Chi**

Irene Bye

Both mind and body are likely to benefit from the practice of Tai Chi since the gentle and focused way in which the body is exercised relaxes the body and calms the mind. Potential health benefits include improved flexibility, muscle tone and balance, and even lower blood pressure. Our well-attended sessions take place in a welcoming, encouraging and non-competitive atmosphere, and begin with a series of warm-up exercises. We then focus on "the form" which is a well-established, precise and flowing sequence of movements. Our professional instructor, Jamie, manages this group of students of varying levels of competence in such a way that beginners quickly make progress. However, gaining expertise takes time and regular practice, and it seems there will always be room for improvement!

### **Travelogue**

Martin Bennett

Fourteen years of travelogue have now passed and the interest and enthusiasm of the class continues unabated. This year our magic carpet has taken us to Moscow to visit the Kremlin and other famous sites. We travelled along canals and the River Volga seeing fabulous monasteries en route and were entertained by peasants in a tiny wooden house to blinis and homemade vodka - or was it aviation spirit? We ended up St. Petersburg visiting the amazing Hermitage Museum, grand palaces, and of course, the ballet. We went to explore Cuba and sail down the Spanish Main to visit Jamaica, Mexico and the Cayman Islands. At Christmas we visited Switzerland and travelled around the lakes and mountains and to the top of the Eiger. In January we returned to Switzerland to see the Matterhorn and many other well-known places, and went on rail trips including the famous Glacier Express. We visited Dorset to explore the Jurassic Coast. Our final travels were to Montenegro, Albania and the islands of Mauritius and Jersey. Sadly it is hard to get volunteers to write this report or give a short talk about their travels - they say they are happy to listen to me! So once again



### Spanish for Absolute Beginners

Carol Noad

During this inaugural year of Spanish Absolute Beginners a determined group of people has overcome its inhibitions in order to say *buenos dias, gracias* and *adios* and that includes the Group Leader! We are working our way through BBC Active Talk Spanish and I have to confess to having a lot of fun on a weekly basis.

### Steam and Transport

Brian Armes

This group has continued to grow and consolidate during the year. The group meets on Wednesday afternoons once a month at the Fleet Football Club. There has been an average attendance of 28 members out of a total membership roll of 44 – many members from last year but several new ones joining during the year. The programme this year has ranged widely covering railways, the Channel Tunnel, London Docklands, Aldershot buses, the Steamship Shieldhall. A visit to the Kennet and Avon Canal Museum at Devizes and the Crofton Pumping Engines is planned for June with a possible trip on the Shieldhall from Southampton in July.

### Table Tennis

John Asprey

Today, fitness is important part of life if you want a long and healthy retirement. Table Tennis is active, great fun and a social event. We are a mixed group of differing ages and abilities who meet every Wednesday from 4 - 6pm at Hart Leisure Centre, Hitches Lane. We mainly play doubles and have up to 3 tables available. New members are always welcome. If you have a pair of trainers in a cupboard then give us a try! Initially, I could loan you a bat to get you going. Even if you have not played for years you will quickly achieve an acceptable standard. Go on give us a try! Have two hours enjoyment for just £1. Parking is free.

### Art 04 Painting together in Watercolour

John Maguire

Unfortunately we lost our Leader / Tutor Geoff Jennings at the beginning of this year as he moved northward nearer to his family. The Group members decided to continue meeting on a self help basis as we seemed to have a range of skills and experience which would lend itself to the idea as a stop gap until a knowledgeable person might come along to fill the role of Leader. The intention was good but the search for a Leader failed so we have continued through the year as a "mutual assistance" bunch. That is not strictly true as during the Autumn and Spring terms we have enjoyed the advice and demonstrations from three of U3A's very talented Leaders; Janice Edmunds, Tony Yates and Peter Forey. Each kindly gave us an afternoon each term to cover such subjects as Still Life; Photos into Paintings; Techniques; Perspective and Distance Illusion. As a change from a free choice of subjects, on a couple of occasions the Group set itself a task to individually interpret the same photograph and later discuss the different approaches adopted. The Summer Term saw the Group incorporating newly acquired ideas over the year into their work. Although only a small Group, a little restricted by its venue, it has been an enjoyable year for everyone, including the welcome working tea break (terrible for washing brushes) kindly organised by Peter. Hopefully, as may be seen at the exhibition, this approach has been beneficial to each individual's work; not least the challenge of unfamiliar subjects and techniques.

### ART 05

#### Do your own thing

Mike Cox

"Do your own thing" is what the Year Book proclaims, and that is what we do. The class has many facets. People tend to concentrate on what they do best. There are a host of people who like painting rural scenes, landscapes, villages with interesting buildings. Even just a picturesque barn door. Then there are

the flower people. Beautiful watercolours of flowers from all of the seasons. I myself have concentrated mainly on animals everything from monkeys to elephants. Then there is one who is unique, she paints in the Chinese style, complete with the correct brushes and pens. Not forgetting the strange flimsy paper. This multitude of styles is regulated by Ron Wyatt, with help from Bill and Gwen. Ron monitors what is being painted offering advice, which is gratefully accepted.

### **Art 06 Explore way to paint**

Phyl Ralton

This group is stimulating! Everyone is encouraged, but not required, to experiment, break away from their "usual" style/media/subject and to make progress in different directions and it is fun! We learn from each other by opening ourselves to friendly criticism and comment. Ask if you are interested.

### **Art 07 Taking Risks**

Alan Denten

The Group, led by Simone Tyson and tutored by Bob Perry, has enjoyed a useful and productive year. Bob, a highly skilled artist of vast experience, is a great help to all of us. When our efforts go wrong, and we don't know why, he responds to our calls for help and puts us right. We are a group of mixed abilities but everyone seems to be making progress. The structure of our activities consists of "Doing our own thing" and working on set subjects on alternate weeks. We work in various media. Some of the set subjects have been:-  
Drawing seated figures from life. Pencil or charcoal, line and wash, painting with two colours only, half-hour drawing, still life, mixed media

A group visited the National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery in September. We joined a conducted tour where the work of several famous artists, from various periods, was explained in detail. We came away with a broader view of the work of the Masters and with enhanced interest of Art in general.

invited and we attempted some other Latin American dances, together with jive and ballroom. We hope to arrange something similar in July 2008. Lunches at the Wyvern Public House at the end of the summer term and at Christmas have added to the friendly and supportive atmosphere of the Salsa Groups.

### **Science and Technology**

Julian Barley

Now in our eleventh year the Group continues to progress strongly with average attendances of 40 Members at our monthly meetings. Our new Leader this year is Peter Histon after distinguished service by Rod Parker and earlier by John Davis. The occupant of the Secretary's post remains unchanged! It has been incredible that we have been able to find new themes to visit for our nine meetings from outside speakers as well as new subjects and updates by volunteering members. We are indeed fortunate that several group members seem to have a wide variety of interests. But we continue to try and persuade reticent Members to give us their thoughts! Highlight subjects this year have been Cosmology, Carbon Fibre Technology, Welding, Health and Safety, an Astronomical Miscellany and very topical views on the causes of the Boeing 777 accident Heathrow.

### **Shakespeare**

Patricia Ward

The enjoyment experienced by our large and enthusiastic group owes much to the knowledge and good organisational skills of Susan d'Andrade, our group leader. This year we have read "King Richard II", "King Henry IV, Part 1", "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor".

Our readings are supplemented by clips from CDs, DVDs and videos. Key points in the texts are drawn out for us by Susan. One of our highlights has been a trip to the Globe to see an excellent production of "The Merchant of Venice" in September 2007. We look forward to a visit to Stratford in September 2008 to see the RSC's production of "Hamlet".

**Music Appreciation**

Alec Robinshaw & Brian Smith

We continue to meet on alternate Thursday afternoons – as we have done for over eleven years. In the comfort of Fleet Methodist Church we enjoy a range of music and, over a cup of tea at the conclusion, each other's company. The programmes usually have a theme of sorts and include introductions giving the background to the composer or the piece or something similar. This makes our sessions more than 'just listening to records', without being too academic. Although we present a majority of the programmes, we are grateful to class members for their contributions from time to time and also to Janice Grey and Bernard Jones, both formerly of Farnborough U3A, who have given us interesting and entertaining afternoons. The highlight of the Spring Term was an organ recital by the Rev. Roy Woodhams on the recently installed organ at St Philip and St James Church. Brian continued his 'Concerto in Context' series by playing Beethoven's 4<sup>th</sup> Piano Concerto alongside music written in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by other composers. He also gave a programme commemorating the anniversaries of various composers. 2008 is rich in such anniversaries including the 150<sup>th</sup> of Puccini's birth, the centenary of Messiaen's birth and the 50<sup>th</sup> of the death of Vaughan Williams. Alec gave a programme devoted exclusively to music for cello in its many varied forms and also an afternoon on the life and music of Weber. Although we average about 45 members at each meeting, we have no waiting list and the church will accommodate at least 150 in comfort! New members are always assured of a welcome.

**Salsa**

Jenny Kirk

What do a rope spin, an octopus and a Torville and Dean have in common? They are each steps we have learnt in our Salsa classes! Last September the two classes successfully combined to make way for a new Beginners class. Although small in number this new group is very enthusiastic and under the caring tuition of James Montgomery is progressing well. Last July five extra classes were arranged to which any Fleet U3A member was

**Art 08 New Painters**

Rosemary Wernham

This group is very addictive - life is never the same again once you join. It is the ideal start for people who want to paint but have usually never held a brush or put paint on paper before. From week one you will learn which brushes to use, the base colours and how to make every colour you need. You start to see the outside world in lights and darks - tonal contrast. By the end of the year you will be producing complete pictures, both still life and scenic, to a standard you thought you would never achieve.

**Art 09 Learn to draw**

Jean Hawkins

Be transported into another world for two hours, being shown how to use pencils, pens, inks and the expertise of a group leader who inspires us all. We are all beginners who together gain a lot more knowledge and insight about the subject. It does not always work but after three terms with Desi you will never look at things in the same way!

**Art 10 Watercolours**

Ann Enever

It is now five years that we have been meeting in the United Reform Church hall with Janice. I am a relatively new member and have found the class very very enjoyable. Janice has introduced us to many subjects and is always there to encourage and assist us. We have covered washes, flower painting, house interiors landscapes and buildings. I am sure we have all gained so much thank you Janice and here's to another year.



## Fleet and District U3A

"For those who love to dance but don't have a partner, line dancing is ideal."

"It's a light-hearted group so we get exercise and fun."

These remarks sum up the enthusiasm and enjoyment we all get from taking part in this activity and hopefully will encourage more members to join us in September. I look forward to seeing you at enrolment.

### **Mah Jong**

Vlady Kell

Play this fascinating game which is very popular in the East - many of our members played it in different countries during there stay there and our fortnightly meetings remind them of their happy times abroad. However, detailed tuition is given to the beginners when we start again in September. We play both Chinese and Western style and mix partners making sure everybody gets a good game. We are a friendly group and always welcome new players.

### **Making greetings cards**

Doreen Coward

This has been a very productive year for the ladies who attend these classes. We have attempted, or improved upon, several techniques including quilling and spirelli, heat embossing and waterfall cards, shakers and sliders, stamping and punching carefully watched and helped by our excellent tutor Christine. We have also made themed cards, i.e. Christmas, Valentine and Easter. The 'homework' undertaken by members of the class gives ideas and scope for a huge variety of cards and many items of equipment are borrowed to try and improve skills.

### **Art 11 Watercolour intermediate and advanced**

Ron Clements

This group is aimed at intermediate and advanced painters. How are those terms defined? Well, I imagine nobody in our group would be bold (or conceited) enough to describe themselves as advanced. I certainly wouldn't. There are even some days when I would hardly dare to describe my painting skills as intermediate! However, what is certain is that nobody in the group is a beginner. We've all mastered some basic skills (not all the same ones mind you), and can be trusted with a sheet of watercolour paper and a box of paints.

Left to our own devices, we can generally produce acceptable paintings. What we still need at this stage in our artistic development is a little nudging, cajoling, pushing and encouraging. Those ingredients are provided by our group leader Peter Forey. Peter is one of those rare artists whose painting style is of an outstandingly high standard and is instantly recognisable. So, when he gives us words of advice we know that he knows what he's talking about. And, accepting that advice takes us one small step nearer to calling ourselves advanced level artists. On a personal note, it will take quite a few of those small steps before, in response to the question 'what do you do?', rather than say 'I paint', I can say 'I'm an artist'. As a group we apply ourselves diligently to our paintings each Monday afternoon. There's an air of concentration in the crowded room and an absence of noisy and distracting chatter. Except, of course, during coffee break when we wander round looking at each others' paintings and making positive and admiring comments.

### **Art 12 Moving forward from basic watercolour**

Philip Day

As one who had done a little water-colour painting and wanted to develop and improve in this field, I have not been disappointed with U3A. I have received guidance and tuition which has helped my drawing and painting and thus increased my enjoyment in this form of art.



## Fleet and District U3A

### Keep Fit

Davina Lawrence

Keep Fit for both men and ladies is a popular, fun, energetic (though not ruthless!) way of exercising to music. We have a delightful professional tutor Carol, who takes us through routines to strengthen and exercise each part of the body. Stretching, balance breathing and posture are also incorporated into the routines. Anyone with a new hip or dodgy joints needn't think Keep Fit is not for them, the various exercises can be adapted to individual needs. We must maintain our mobility, stamina and energy levels – use it or lose it.

### Line Dancing

Jenny Webb

We are now approaching the end of our third year and membership is steadily increasing. We have a few spaces in the second group (beginners and improvers) but unless we can find a larger hall the first group (more advanced) has reached its maximum. Last September we moved to new premises at Elvetham Heath. We now have a very comfortable, light and airy hall and car parking is no longer a problem. Our thanks go to James for his patience and good humour. His relaxed attitude and pleasant personality help to make every session so enjoyable. Also I would like to thank Wendy Hawley for her hard work. She stepped down at Christmas after two and a half years as Group Leader. I invited the members of both groups to give their comments about Line Dancing and a selection of these are listed below:

"The exercise is as good as an hour's workout in the gym."

"Great hour, wish it was twice a week."

"Good company, good teaching and hopefully good exercise. Love it!"

"Lively group, look forward to it every week."

"Now I look forward to Monday mornings, I didn't when I was at work."

"Great to be able to dance without a reluctant man. Exercise and fun!"

### Art 13 Painting Structure and Technique

Ken Pickworth

Our class has worked through a structured syllabus during the year. We have so far covered composition, perspective, drawing techniques, tonal values and colour mixing. This consolidates and builds on the knowledge we have acquired from earlier classes and works well with the varying levels of painting experience of class members.

Each week we have drawn or painted, mainly in water colour, to practice the topics being taught. We have done life drawing (fully clothed!) with members taking turns to model. We have also looked at different ways to apply paint to paper as well as the preparation of paper for watercolour painting. Some of our work has formed part of the U3A exhibit at Fleet Hospital.

### Ballroom dancing

Ron Gwynn

In the early afternoon each Tuesday when most pensioners are having a siesta some 40 or more U3A members are drawn to the two classes at the Crookham Memorial Hall to "**Face the Music and Dance**". Under the guidance of our Tutor James, we syncope to those "**Fascinating Rhythms**" of yesteryear and relive the memories they revive. It requires concentration, energy and perseverance but in return we derive great pleasure and an increase in mental and physical agility. James is a very understanding Tutor who always talks us into each dance and breaks down new dance patterns into manageable proportions. Over the two years the classes have run we have acquired a good knowledge of a wide range of dances. We were weaned on the Waltz, further fascinated by the Foxtrot and tantalised by Tangos both Latin and Square. Music is an international language and we have learned to express ourselves in many ways from jumping in the Jive to revealing our romantic responses in the Rumba. The Paso Doble draws out passion and dominance whilst the Samba is suitably satisfying for those of a carefree disposition. The challenging Cha Cha Cha demands faultless footwork whilst the Bossa Nova benefits

from fluidity and grace. All these dances we are seeking to develop further and perhaps as our bodies get more supple and our minds more adventurous we may attempt more complicated variations. The atmosphere in the classes is friendly and helpful for we are all there to enjoy ourselves and the music. Everyone appreciates that our learning curves move both up and down and sometimes sideways. Dancing is a sociable pastime and in the often crowded corners of the Ballroom we really are "**Dancing Cheek to Cheek**". Credit must go to Iris Martin for fulfilling her duties as Group Leader in such an admirable way. This entailed organising a Christmas Special to which the dancers responded magnificently by in many cases "**Putting on the Style**". In these days of Disco Dancing, where the din is so deafening that conversation is impossible and contact with a partner is discouraged, it is a delight to discover that Ballroom dancing is still as beautifully satisfying as ever. Charles Aznavour encouraged us to "**Dance in the Old Fashioned Way**", but, unfortunately, he always had to dance with himself! In our classes most dancers are partnered and James will always do his best to ensure that no one remains alone. Television has done much recently to promote our style of dancing. The celebrities do wonders in a week. James appreciates at our age learning is a slower process but both he and his students are amazed at how far we have come. If you are "**Dancing in the Dark**" do not be frightened to come out into the Tuesday daylight. The new Term is your time to "**Begin the Beguine**". Take the first steps Slow, Slow then getting Quicker . and you will find it "**S Wonderful, ..... S Marvellous**".

### Beginners Bridge

Yarborough (Colin Long)

For Mike and Sylvia, instructors bold,  
The story here just must be told.  
T'was Autumn when we Beginners assembled,  
At Willis Hall we sat and trembled.  
Epitaphed to distraction and mentally stretched,  
The order of suits from our memories fetched.  
Openers and Responders we became  
All the while learning to play the game.

### International Folk Dancing

Dorothy Butler

I have been dancing with Jane and Michael Clark for many years, and have always thoroughly enjoyed being a member of their group. We meet at the Crookham Memorial Hall on alternate Friday mornings. This year, for the first time, the Women's World Day of Prayer service included an optional circle dance and we were asked if we would take part. Ten members of the group attended the service at Fleet Methodist church and performed a dance called "Halleluiah For The Whole World." If you enjoy dancing do come and join us. You don't need a partner, because most dances are done in a circle or in a line. Jane teaches or revises the steps of each dance before we do it. We all make mistakes sometimes, but that just adds to the fun! We look forward to welcoming you to our friendly group.

### Jazz Appreciation

Ron Clements

You could be forgiven for assuming the group of elderly pensioners sitting quietly in Fleet Methodist Church have gathered to say their last farewells to an old friend. Well, you'd be wrong, although an old friend of sorts is involved. You're looking at the Jazz Appreciation Group listening intently to an old and well-loved jazz favourite. 'Jazz', you may think, 'in the church; that's most inappropriate'. Wrong again when you consider early jazz evolved and was influenced by the religious spiritual music of the African slaves in America's deep south. The musical tastes of our group of jazz aficionados are varied and wide-ranging. Many prefer the 'hot' jazz of those early New Orleans jazz greats. As they listen they may well be thinking of their own participation in the trad jazz revival of the post-war period. Others are reliving their youthful excursions to their local dance hall where they jived the evening away to the music of the smooth and swinging big bands. And there are those who quietly reflect on the more cerebral 'cool' jazz of the bebop and modern jazz eras. Whatever your taste in jazz, why not join us? We can promise you a warm welcome and many hours of enjoyable listening at our informative and entertaining sessions.



## Fleet and District U3A

by two French ladies, Annie Beunier and Roselyne Bizot. They are very welcome because they cover special grammar aspects and encourage chat on a wide range of subjects which helps to improve our pronunciation. Other classes have been led by Marion Turner and myself, making much use of the Francophiles magazine "La Vie Outre-Manche". Special meetings this session have included watching a new French film "Etre et avoir", a BBC programme Ma France and a child's interpretation of a visit to Monet's garden led by Charles Hicks. Finally the entire group much enjoyed a New Year Lunch at the French restaurant in-stalled at the Cricketers Pub in Hartley Wintney.

### **French - Intermediate**

Barbara Lyons

This year we have been quite a large group averaging about 18 participants at sessions, and the classes have been well attended throughout. We have moved into a larger room which has advantages and disadvantages, but everyone has enjoyed the lessons and even progressed with both speaking and understanding French! The "pause café" we take full advantage of to chat (not in French!) and catch up with one another! For two sessions a term Annie Beunier comes in to "immerse" us in French and her lessons are always very enjoyable and worthwhile. We even learnt some French recipes! To provide something of a change, we twice went to Rosalind's house to watch French films, on DVD, Etre et Avoir ( a very charming film about a tiny school in rural France) and La Gloire de Mon Pere from the Marcel Pagnol novel. It was agreed by all that this was a very good way of spending Monday morning! At Christmas we enjoyed good French cuisine in nice surroundings when we went for lunch at L'Auberge at the Cricketers in Hartley Wintney. Our thanks are due to Rosalind whose hard work forms the basis for the success of this group, and thank you too for inviting us to your home.



## Fleet and District U3A

One suited, two suited and sometimes a jump We struggled to get or minds over the hump. No trump shape and the Rule of Twenty, 4441 shape – we feel we've learned plenty. We're getting there, wherever there may be, Perhaps by the end of the year we shall see. So join us so you too may join in the fun, I'm told that we've only just begun.

### **Bridge Improvers**

Colin McClune

Bridge Improvers is held every Friday afternoon and builds on and reinforces the knowledge gained from Bridge Beginners. Continuity is assured since Mike Brown takes both courses. Bridge Improvers is also suitable as a refresher for those who already have some knowledge of bridge but need to be reminded of the basics. The target by the end of the course is to give participants the skills and confidence to play at any bridge club.

Each week the two hour class is divided between the teaching of a specific topic and playing hands which enable the new topic to be practised. It is not necessary to have a partner to attend these classes. On average this year about 30 people participate each week and enjoy the friendly and relaxed atmosphere which makes the learning of this great card game both enjoyable and stress-free!

### **Bowls**

Ellen Cosser

Dictionary definition: "Round wooden objects which are rolled with great skill to nestle closely to a little white ball called the 'Jack'. Participants of the game excel at this." RUBBISH. They are rolled all over the place - well in my case they were. Two years ago I plucked up courage to ring Richard Battarbee and ask if I could come along to the weekly roll up. In my defence I did warn him that I had never held a bowl in my life - but fancied it! Richard is a very generous man; never flinching as I



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proceeded to create havoc on the Bowling Green. Woods going everywhere. I prayed for the session to end. However after some coaching and endless encouragement from Richard and the group I am now a level one player. Reckon I have not got enough years left to make number two. It is great fun and we are a very sociable crowd. Christmas saw us taking over the Fox and Hounds for supper accompanied by spouses who do not play bowls but suffer in silence. My fellow players continue to humour me and make Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings a highlight of my week. Thank you Richard and the U3A Bowls club. Keep on rolling.

### **Calligraphy I**

Shelia Williams

This group has worked very hard this year and covered two scripts so far. Foundational, known for its simplicity, belongs to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century although the basis of the script is 966 A.D.; the Ramsey Psalter. They have completed work on Uncial script brought to Southern England in 597 by St. Augustine. Its name means 'inch' or 'inch high letter'. Everyone has given thought to the layout of their work and decorated it with a simple Celtic motif a 'triskelle knot'. In the summer term they will be starting on the Italic script. For the Summer Exhibition on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June both classes will use the same text but will interpret it in their own individual way. Calligraphy II will use Cadels, elaborate and decorative capital letters and Gothic Black Letter Script. I shall be interested to see the outcome.

It is a real pleasure to teach them, they work hard and produce good work and I have to run to keep up with them. We have lots of laughs and encourage each other. Come and join us.

### **Calligraphy II**

Marjorie Derges

Calligraphy means, "The Art of beautiful writing". People could be deterred this and say their writing is not good enough. A number of us in Calligraphy II would readily admit our normal writing is far from "Beautiful", but our lessons are always full of



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Watch next year's programme. The group members are there to help each other. If someone has a problem with their research, there is a good chance that someone else has had a similar problem and can suggest a way to solve it. We all delight in hearing about the success stories. Only those of us who have been hunting for an elusive member of the family can really appreciate the excitement and need to share the news when he or she appears out of the records. Each year we ask someone to produce a display for the exhibition meeting. Next year, could it be you?

### **Financial Affairs**

Brian Robinson

We continue to have a strong attendance for our meetings, of 30-35 members at our first and third Monday morning sessions, each month. Lively discussion results from articles, comments, information and experiences brought to the meeting by members. Based on topical items from commentators in the money sections of week-end newspapers etc., we can keep up to date with current issues. Topics cover a spectrum of aspects of finance, including investments, savings, inheritance tax, and long-term care as well as everyday matters of energy and telephone costs, insurance etc. The agenda is flexible to include any items that members bring to the meeting, which may be of interest to the group. The social side of the meeting happens during the break, when members chat together over coffee prepared by a team of three members on a rota basis. We have to thank other teams that erect tables and chairs for the meeting to proceed and also another member who arranges a little 'flutter' on the 'predict the FTSE 100' Competition!

### **French - Advanced**

Ray Oldham

We have continued to meet every Wednesday afternoon with about 10 and 12 members present each week. The meetings have included items which have helped us to improve our French vocabulary and use of the correct grammar but always with plenty of laughter and chat. About a third of the classes are led



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### Europeans

Derek Stroud

Our aim in this Group is to gain a better understanding of the European Union by trying to "look underneath" the public rhetoric that so often accompanies the subject. Over the last ten years we have adopted various approaches: studying each member state, the background to the formation of the EEC, the main institutions, and some of the policies - on competition, consumer protection and the environment for example. Recently we have turned our attention to the EU role in world trade negotiations, climate change, development aid and peace-keeping.

This year, inevitably, much of our attention has been directed at the Reform Treaty and the passage of the European Union (Amendment) Bill through the Commons. But as well as this rather solid stuff we have ranged over a wide variety of issues among them the elections in Poland, Spain, Denmark and Romania, border controls, Kosovo and energy security and climate change. Less seriously, an exhibition of cartoons, *Britain's relationship with "Europe" 1957-2007* at the Cartoon Gallery in London provided some amusement.

Our discussions are always lively so do come along if you are interested.

### Family History

Marian Shattock

The family history groups have had another successful year. The beginners' course, which is aimed at people wondering about how to start researching their family tree, runs during the autumn term for six sessions. Each session explains a different aspect of research, from gathering and collating information to setting out a family tree. This class is limited to 20, as there is a follow-up class in the afternoon at Calthorpe Park School using the computers.

The workshop group continues to grow to such an extent we are changing the venue to ease the seating and parking situation.



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interest and the Calligraphy is, in itself, an Art form. For instance last term we looked at the writing on the Trajan column and practiced it with special interest in the shading of the letters to give them depth. Very useful for Christmas cards etc. This term we have concentrated on Copperplate script, and next term we are threatened with Gothic black letter. Our class is not only hard working - we tell Sheila she is a hard task master! - but great fun. Just what U3A is all about.

### Creative Writing

Julie Clark

We've been asked to write a line or two  
And hope this group will appeal to you  
We're made up of a mixed and lively bunch  
Who meet Tuesdays-twice monthly after lunch

You can write a story or compose an ode instead  
Chatter's always exciting once the work has been read  
Parking is free, there's biscuits and, of course a cup of tea  
We hope that you'll say "YES this surely is the one for me!"

### Cycling

Terry Klaschka

The Cycling Group started 10 years ago when 4 riders joined the Inaugural ride on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1998 on a route which included Pyestock, Cove, Bramshot and Fleet Pond.

I had started the group with the hope of doing more cycling in company both for environment-conscious reasons and as an outdoor exercise and leisure pursuit. After spending a lot of time looking at lots of maps, I devised a number of circular routes of about 10 miles starting from Fleet, taking advantage of the canal towpath and other tracks to escape some of the busy roads.

We had some successful trial rides over the summer of 1998, so the group was established from there, meeting to ride once every 3 weeks. The following summer, we decided to take a day ride around the New Forest, taking a packed lunch, (and nicely



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rounded off in a teashop).

That pattern has continued over the years. We have over a dozen local ride routes, with variants, when typically 5 to 10 riders turn up, and the Summer Day Ride (about 25 miles long) usually attracts 8 to 15 riders and has reached out to some really attractive riding areas within about hour or so's drive. From time to time we have also taken a social trip on the John Pinkerton.

Some nice things about the rides are that we see (from the quiet and comfort of a bike saddle) so much of the quieter nature and countryside that lies in and around this busy, noisy area. The most recent ride included the canal towpath back from Spratts Hatch with carpets of primroses, profuse birdsong, plus a heron flying display, and sightings of violets, wood anemones, and king-cups. Some nice things about the group are that they are a bunch of nice people offering good companionship and great discussions when we stop for the coffee break; and its also nice that we are fairly even numbers of men and women.

The day ride last year started from Brockenhurst, whence we rode to Lymington, took the ferry to Yarmouth, IoW and rode (or sometimes walked!) up over Tennyson Down, in or above the cloud at times. The year before in superb hot, sunny weather, we rode the Salterns Way, which starts from Chichester, and follows the side of Chichester Harbour down to the sea at West Wittering, (and back of course).

So here's to our approaching 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, and may there be many more! And will you be joining us on a ride soon?

**English Literature**  
Dorothy Butler

I joined the English Literature group seven [is it really seven?] years ago and I have enjoyed every session I have attended virtually all of them. The group numbers about twenty or so, mostly women and sometimes only women, but often we have one, two or even three brave men. The books we read cover a



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wide canvas. From the classics -Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy - to the latest in modern literature Last term, for instance, we read Rose Tremain's "The Colour" and during the coming term we are returning to Hardy and studying his short stories and poems. Our approach is straightforward and clear-cut. Suggestions as to what we might read are collected from the group in general and then our leader, Betty Fox, Secretary, Dorothy Butler and one or two group members usually meet over coffee to choose from the selection on offer. A group member then offers to deliver the book to the group and this does entail, I must admit, a certain amount of detailed work. But it is fascinating and exciting work. I have done it many times and I always enjoy it. It would be wonderful if more members of the group would take the risk and volunteer; we have about four or five regular members who offer to do this and a few more would be so very helpful. The work involves reading the book very thoroughly, deciding the important passages that will be read aloud and summarising the story in between these passages. At the sessions, the Reader takes over the Leadership role, keeping the group in touch with the main thrust of the story, and calling on group members to read the chosen passages aloud. Time is left at the end of every session for comments and discussion. The group members are a lively and vital bunch, with plenty to say and acute observations to be made on every book we read. Every time we meet I wish (and I don't think I am alone) that we had more time for our stimulating discussions but perhaps that speaks for itself about the success of the group. We always leave wishing for more.