

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The retirement from the committee, at the AGM, of four very experienced members caused some problems. We were only able to recruit three replacements and it took us a little time to organise ourselves. We were pleased to co-opt Stewart Knowles, as a non-committee member, to look after publicity and he has already published some press articles. Fleet U3A continues to grow and with over 800 members we are the largest charitable organisation in Fleet. With this in mind we approached Hart Council to see if we could get any assistance from them. In particular we were looking for secure storage space and reserved parking for two cars at the rear of the Harlington Centre on Monthly Meeting days. Unfortunately they were unwilling to help us. We will however continue in our efforts. As always we are keeping a watchful eye on the operation and expenditure of the NEC, to satisfy ourselves that the capitation fees are justified. Recently we had a visit from the Area Representative, a meeting that was attended by some 30 group leaders. Unfortunately this meeting was not very positive and we will have to express our concerns at forthcoming Regional Meetings of West Surrey and N.E. Hampshire U3A's. This Summer Review covers most of our groups from A to I. The remaining groups will be featured in our Winter Review. Finally I would like to thank all of you for your continuing encouragement and support.

Gerard Walton



Les Ayrton looks at the Family History Group!

ART:
the largest of the Groups, it has now been reorganised.

The Painting Groups

At present we have seven painting groups - Art 1,11 and III, and Anyone Can Paint 1 to 4 - and at the last Group leaders meeting it became apparent that this was causing confusion since these titles implied that people can progress from one group to the next as they become more experienced. This was not the intention, and so the Group leaders have held a meeting to try to find some more descriptive titles for the respective groups. As a result the groups we hope to run from next September are as follows:

Prelude to Painting (replacing Anyone can paint 2)

This will be a group for beginners and will be a one-year course concentrating on drawing initially and then leading on to watercolour. It will be led by David Bowden and will take place in the Bowenhurst Church Hall from 2pm until 4pm every Monday. However at present there is a doubt over the availability of this hall and the arrangements may have to be changed.

Watercolour for Beginners (replacing Anyone can paint 1)

This will be the second year of a two-year course for watercolour beginners. Janice Edmunds will be the leader, and it will meet on Wednesdays in the United Reform Church Hall from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

Watercolour Improvers (replacing Anyone can paint 4)

This will be a one year course run by Tony Yates in the WI Hall in Crookham Village from 1.30pm - 4pm on Mondays. It will be for those who already have some experience of painting in watercolour.

Painting together in Watercolour (replacing Art 2)

This will be an untutored group for those who enjoy painting watercolours with others of a like mind. However, there will be a leader who will be on hand to give advice where it is needed. It will meet in the Crookham WI hall on Tuesday afternoons from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. The name of leader will be announced later.

Develop Your Watercolours (new group)

This will be a one-year course for those who have been using watercolours for some time and wish to develop new techniques. It will be run by Desi Mills on Monday afternoons in the Bowenhurst Church Hall, sharing with Prelude to Painting but again subject to the availability of the hall.

Acrylics (replacing Anyone can paint)

Peter Webster will tutor this group, concentrating on painting in acrylics. The Group will meet in the Willis Hall from 2pm to 4pm on Mondays.

Look and See (new group)

Desi will run a one-year course for those who wish to improve their drawing skills. It will take place on Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm-3.30 pm in the United Reform Church Hall starting on October 10th.

Experiment With Paint (replacing Art 3)

This will be for those who wish to branch out into using a variety of mediums and materials and to try out different techniques in watercolour, acrylics, oils, pastels and mixed media. It will be led by Brian Fox, taking place in the St John's Ambulance hall from 1.45 to 4.30pm on Wednesdays.

Advanced Painting (new group)

Desi will run a small painting group for those with some considerable experience already. It will be by invitation only and will meet in the Willis Hall on Tuesdays from 1.30pm until 4pm.

Art (replacing Art 1)

The original art group, where people 'do their own thing', will continue to meet in the Willis Hall on Wednesday afternoons at 1.45pm

under the leadership of Ron Wyatt.

Hopefully these descriptions will enable people to know which groups they wish to enrol for on September 11th next and will enable us to absorb the waiting lists which have built up for all the present groups.

U3A Fleet -Summer Painting Programme

The summer painting programme for U3A painting groups will take place on Wednesday afternoons starting at 2pm. They will be untutored, but normally at least one of the group leaders will be there to give advice if needed. Participants will have to make their own decisions as to whether to go if the weather is doubtful.

The programme is:

July 3rd and 10th -Cron dall. meet by the church.

July 17 th and 24th -Odiham. Meet by the canal at Colt Hill -just past the Waterwitch pub.

July 31st and August 7th -Trilakes Country Park. On the road from Yateley to Sandhurst. There is a small entrance fee. Meet in the car park outside.

August 14 th and 21st -Farnham. Meet by the parish church .

August 28 th and September 4th -Hartley Wintney. Meet by the old St.Mary's church. Take the road from Fleet to Hartley Wintney(A323) and turn left just as you approach Hartley Wintney where the road bends sharply to the right. This is the road to Winchfield. and St Mary's is about half a mile down that road.

ART APPRECIATION

We have had very interesting talks this year. Three members of Farnham U3A Art History Group have given talks on Welsh Artists, Women Artists 1850-2000 and The History of Calligraphy, and Van Gogh and Gauguin in Arles. Our own group have given talks on the lives and works of Paul Cezanne in November, and this term, Pierre Bonnard and Georges Seurat. All these artists had a profound influence on modern painting. We like to comment and ask questions about the artists at the end of each meeting.

Sheila Williams

BIRDWATCHING

Once again, we had some enjoyable outdoor meetings this year, although at one stage it looked as though the programme might have to be severely curtailed owing to the imposition of foot & mouth disease restrictions. As it was, we were able to go ahead with four walks, as restrictions were gradually eased. On average, about twelve people turned up for each walk, an ideal number for this kind of activity. As well as the faithful stalwarts who once again signed up for the course, it was nice to meet some new faces in addition.

We visited four locations, namely Fleet Pond, Blackbushe Airfield & Yateley Common, Moor Green Lakes (near Finchampstead) and the Basingstoke Canal (between Crookham Wharf & Tundry Pond). On the whole the weather was kind to us and indeed the final walk, along the Basingstoke Canal, took place in uninterrupted glorious sunshine! Throughout these walks we encountered 62 species of birds. My thanks to all who supported the programme of outings and many thanks once again to Dave and Joan Hubbard for allowing us to hold the preliminary meeting in their home.

Gilbert Oland

BOWLS

The Bowls Group started up in November last year. Starting with a bang, (well perhaps "bump" would be a better word), it is now quite definitely on a "roll". We have twelve dedicated members, all of whom, I regret to say, are putting the Coach and the Leader to shame. All of us are enjoying it enormously. Indeed, one ex golfer was heard to remark: "It's really refreshing always knowing where the little white ball is and not having to spend the afternoon looking for it".

The indoor season ends on 10th April but, as from 2nd May, the Group is starting up again outdoors, playing weekly from 10.30 to 12.30 am each Thursday at Fleet Social Bowling Club on Clarence Road (weather permitting). New members will be very welcome but you will need your own shoes and bowls.

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BRIDGE

The Bridge Club meets every Thursday. There is a Beginners Class, very well organised and run by Mary O'Conner. For anyone genuinely interested in learning to play Bridge this is an ideal starting point.

On completion of the Beginners Class, players move up to the Intermediate Stage. This provides the opportunity to participate in competitive play, with around seven tables at each session.

The playing format for the Intermediates is Duplicate Bridge with a Mitchell movement. There is a good mixture of sexes and ages and it is certainly a pleasant and enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.

It is intended to introduce further tuition for the Intermediate Class; probably in the form of a couple of set hands per session. Following play there will be a post mortem on these hands with a discussion of the bidding, the final contract and how the hand should have been played.

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CALLIGRAPHY 1 AND 2

This year we have worked hard improving our calligraphy. We have concentrated on Roman and Lombardic Capitals and Italic Scripts. To make our work more interesting we have used colour and different weights and size of letters. We have made single section books. New members have learned Foundational and Italic Script. This term we shall gild and decorate Versals. We are a friendly, humorous and hardworking group encouraging each other and sharing our ideas. **The calendar designed for year 2003 is now on sale for £2.20p.**

Sheila Williams

CHESS

We have been meeting once a week in the autumn and winter terms for friendly games and occasional coaching. We have had our second, very informal, match with the Fleet Chess Club and have been challenged to a future match with the Camberley U3A chess group.

Numbers are small, typically five or six with about equal numbers of men and women. We have decided to meet once a fortnight when we resume in the autumn, on Wednesday afternoons at the WRVS offices. Players of any standard are welcome.

hilli Gethin

COMPUTER WORKSHOPS

Our variety of Workshops has increased since we started with just one Beginners Group in 1997. We are continuing to add new Groups and many members continue to develop their computer expertise with the Fleet Learning Centre.

Our Groups are:

Beginners Word Processing

This Workshop is designed for absolute beginners and those with little PC

experience. Using individual attention, the workshop covers input, storage and formatting information and introduces technology. Topics include simple letters; minutes; greetings cards; tables with formulae; etc., Imagine being part of a hum of quiet activity pervading the atmosphere as members work their way through training material in a friendly and supportive Group.

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Introduction to Windows

This is a new Group starting in September 2002. Your new computer arrived to day - where do you go from here? The sessions will, with the minimum of technical jargon, take a fun approach with the aim of putting you in charge of your computer. Absolute beginners are welcome but it will help you if you have regular access to a computer running Windows 95, 98, ME or XP.

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Introduction to Internet and E-Mail

Start using the Internet and talk to you Grandchildren wherever they are in the World. Exchange news and photographs. This workshop shows you how. We introduce the Internet and how to use the basics.

an Ste henson

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Intermediate Internet

Been using the Internet and want to know more? This new Workshop will start for the first time in September 2002. A requirement for this Group is that you should have attended the Introductory sessions or are already using the Internet.

We will look at the Internet through example case studies e.g. 'What is the cheapest flight to Barcelona in June?' or 'How can I get to Paris by car?'

an Ste henson

CREATIVE WRITING

We are having another interesting and enjoyable year. We have written short stories, articles, mini-sagas and poems on subjects ranging from "Rails " to "Blind Date. " We have attempted to plan a novel and to conduct and write-up an interview. We are always surprised at the range of writing which results even when we all write on the "set" subject for that session although members, if they wish, will write on a subject of their own choice.

We attempt to give each other support, encouragement and constructive appraisal of written work and we enjoy the companionship and fun of belonging to the group. A new member of the group, a retired professional journalist, gave a very interesting talk and we have been exploring the differences and similarities between writing for pleasure and writing for publication. The great goal of publication is an aspiration (or a pipe dream) of most members of the group but, in the meantime, we enjoy trying to improve our writing skills.

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CYCLING

Most rides are on Thursday mornings, about 10 miles long, at a fairly leisurely pace, starting from Reading Road Canal Wharf at 10am. We use off-road tracks, cycle ways, and quiet roads, where possible; and any sturdy bike is suitable. It is a small and friendly group, and there is great conversation in the coffee break. In the summer some rides are longer. We have cycled in the New Forest, along the Ridgeway, and taken long rides down the

canal towpath, returning by train.

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DRESSMAKING

We have made jackets and waistcoats this year, learning how to set in sleeves, shoulder pads, linings and buttonholes. These combined with learning the right pressing techniques have produced some professional looking garments.

Those of us who had managed to lose weight were able to remake garments and produce a whole new wardrobe! Of course without Gladys to guide us in her good-humoured way we would be lost. Her expert tuition is invaluable.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

Our numbers this year have fluctuated greatly from over twenty to nine for various reasons. The choice of books to read is greatly determined by the availability of multiple copies of books so that we can all read them. We looked at "Mrs Dalloway" by Virginia Woolf, read Arthur Miller's play "A View from the Bridge", and then studied "Brighton Rock" by Graham Greene. After Easter, we co-operated with Fleet Library to look at the list of entries for the Orange Prize in 2002. It will be interesting to see how our comments compare with the final choice of winner.

elen Gethin

EUROPEANS

Our purpose is to better understand Britain's relationship with it. We study the history, the institutions of the Union, and current issues. Discussion is lively and all views are welcome. This year we have concentrated on enlargement (with a specialist speaker), reform of the EU institutions and the euro. We composed some observations on the Commission's

White Paper on Governance -and these were duly placed on the Commission's web site at the end of March. We are due to make a visit, following one last year to Brussels, to Strasbourg and possibly, Aachen.

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FINANCIAL AFFAIRS GROUP

The Financial affairs group meet on the first and third Monday morning of each month.

Much of the discussion by the group members at the meetings is based on topical items reported and commented on by financial writers in the current Money sections of weekend newspapers. These articles give up-to-date information on money affairs, provide interesting topics and involve many aspects of finance including investments & savings, insurance matters, financial products and related items.

An outside speaker is normally invited to address the group at one meeting during each term session, dealing with, financial, retirement planning and care issues.

FRENCH CONVERSATION

At some of the meetings, we read, translate and discuss items from the Anglo/French magazine "La Vie Outre- Manche", French newspapers and other publications. We also talk about holidays, grandchildren and other interesting and amusing happenings in our family lives. About once each month, Madame Bizot leads the discussion, which helps to improve our accents and extend our vocabulary. Also as a change from talking French, we have watched two French films.

Apart from our weekly meetings, we had a Christmas Lunch together at O Toulouse and in January, five members of the Group went to the "Vive La France" exhibition at Olympia.

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FRENCH INTERMEDIATE

By unanimous request, we have started BBC French Experience 1 again, which means the group should be entitled French Beginners! We try to keep the action as communicative as possible, so the accent is on speaking and listening. So far we have practised ordering food and drink, studied jobs and occupations, talked about where we live and discussed family relationships. A video of the course belonging to one of the group members makes a refreshing break from routine.

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GERMAN BEGINNERS

We are a small friendly group, with varying reasons for wishing to learn German. We use several course books dealing with booking accommodation, travelling in Germany, shopping, using tourist information, etc, whilst gaining a general view of German life. Basic conversation, reading and translation skills and sentence building are all covered with the help of audiocassettes and video recordings of programmes such as "Deutsch Plus".
Wir lernen, aber wir haben auch Spass!

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HISTORY

The History class continues to grow with

98 members now on the register. The highest turnout has been 72 with an overall average of 60. These numbers have been most encouraging for the speakers, but have put pressure on the tea and coffee logistics. Our programme this year has been wide and varied and in order of presentation was as follows;

Rudolf Hess by Peter Smith, the Duke of Wellington by Neil Paxton, George IV by Ellsie Russell, a German Soldier at Stalingrad by an outside speaker, Henry Mettleman, Mary Queen of Scots by June Knowles, the Falklands Campaign by Philip Gething, Samuel Pepys by Jim Russell, Captain Cook by Jim Lacey, Rameses II by Rosemary Greener, the Mongol Invasion by an outside speaker Gerry Clarke, Edward VIII by June Knowles, Afghan Wars by Neil Paxton.

For the summer session we have the following presentations;

The American Civil War, the Battle of Bannockburn, the Selborne Riots of 1830, Edwina Mountbatten, R V Jones, and finally we end up with the History of the Loo.

I wish to thank the above members for their very professional presentations, made with that necessary touch of humour that helps to oil the wheels of time and bring a smile to the faces of the audience, thereby momentarily deadening the pain induced by the hard seat.

Finally I wish to thank the secretary Bryn Brassington for keeping the books, Neil Paxton for his enthusiastic hard work as Deputy Fuhrer, Jane Brassington who procures all our refreshment supplies and keeps a watchful eye on the boiler room, and Kristina Humphreys who must be the best and fastest washer-up in the U3A, and least but not last all those members that are now volunteered by alphabetical order to make the tea, and those willing helpers who wipe-up and leave the kitchen spotless.

eter Smith

INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

The International Folk Dance Group enjoy folk and national dances from many European countries (and some further afield), particularly traditional line and circle dances from South-eastern Europe and some Eastern Mediterranean countries, for which no partners are needed. All dances are taught or talked through. They are great fun and reasonably authentic, having been collected in the countries of origin, or brought here by visiting teams and teachers. The music is often very beautiful melodically, and is sometimes played on unusual instruments not found in the modern orchestra or band! Always the music fits the dance with which it has evolved.

During the past year we have learnt dances from France Turkey, Macedonia, Germany, Israel, Romania, Greece and Taiwan -and become proficient enough to enjoy them.

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INTERESTING STATISTICS

From a survey of 3,000 U3A members in 2001.

Reason for joining:

29% said social contact, 10% said mental stimulation.

26% were active in one group

25% in two groups

19% in three groups

21% in more than four groups

8% take part in no group activities.

Women formed 74% of the membership.

The ages of the members were spread:

21% were 60 and younger

49% between 65 and 74

30% were over 75

13% were over 80

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