

U3A

# Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 175

July/August 2011



## The Galapagos Islands by Ged Cassell

[www.fairfordu3a.org.uk](http://www.fairfordu3a.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 1072658

### General Meetings

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm

#### 5 July

Change of speaker.

The Galapagos Islands, with an  
Emphasis on Evolution  
by Ged Cassell

#### 2 August

Fairford open gardens and tea  
at the Community Centre

#### 6 September

Medicine in the Third World  
by Malcom Cutler

### Tea Rota

September 6 : Book Circle 2

October 4 : Bridge

November 1 : Chess

### New Members

We welcome:

Sarah Bottomley

Helen Donnellan

### Today, 5 July

Ged Cassell will be giving us an illustrated talk on the Galapagos Islands, which are a remote, hostile environment filled with astonishing and fascinating wildlife. They also have a unique place in the history of science. Charles Darwin visited the islands in the 1830s when he was formulating his theory of evolution - a scientific discovery that would scandalise Victorian society and rock scientific thinking to its foundations, and is still controversial today. We shall look at the reptiles, mammals and birds of the Galapagos and try to understand them as Darwin did, as the result of thousands of years of change, evolution and extinction.

Ged has kindly stepped in to take the place of Ellie Targett who will now be giving her talk in January 2012.

In August several members have kindly offered to open their gardens to members. Tea will be served in the Community Centre at the end of the afternoon. Information and a map are enclosed with this Newsletter.

*Sally Lightfoot Crabs*

*They forage for algae and scavenge for meat  
and crawl right over the heads and the feet  
of their neighbors, who don't seem to care...*

## U3A June

Welcome to 'Morning Dew'

When Mike and Pat Ledbury came to the June meeting of Fairford and District U3A their aim was to use traditional music to provide **E**nlightenment, **E**ducation, **E**xercise and **E**ntertainment. Believing learning should be fun, the two of them certainly achieved these aims. Enlightenment flowed throughout the performance but was most strikingly illustrated when a few opening notes caused a stir in the audience, despite something sounding not quite 'right'. All became clear when Mike, striding across the hall as across the English counties, played furiously on one of his two melodeons and seamlessly modulated the tune from a Derbyshire folk song into the better-known Helston Furry dance. The enigma remaining was, 'Had Derbyshire miners taken the tune to Cornwall or vice versa?'

Many times during the hour there was a frisson of excitement as songs from school or student days were fondly recalled. Two more examples of the way songs had evolved and travelled were the Wild Colonial Boy and Waltzing Matilda. Words for the latter were written by an interesting Australian poet, 'Banjo' Paterson.

Education came with learning about the melodeons and how the notes are produced and about the derivations of the songs. Pat provided a haunting and apt accompaniment for all the music on a replica Napoleonic battle drum. Exercise was achieved by standing and knee bending while using one foot to keep the wheels of 'early industrial machinery' turning.

As for the final '**E**', there was no doubt the whole occasion was highly entertaining.

Sylvia Jones

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*...that they are there,  
on the black lava rock  
that the two of them share.*

## GROUP EVENTS

Please contact the group leaders listed below each entry if you are interested in joining any of the groups or visit [www.fairfordu3a.org.uk](http://www.fairfordu3a.org.uk) for further information

### Biography

*Wednesday 3 August*

We shall meet at 2.30pm at Iris's house to discuss more biographies of our choice.

New members will be very welcome!

Kevin Hannigan  
01367 250246  
hannigan100@hotmail.com

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### Book Circle 1

*Tuesday 12 July*

We shall discuss 'House of Orphans' by Helen Dunmore at Eileen Ryan's home (01285 712927)

*Tuesday 9 August*

Our book will be 'Embers' by Sandor Marai at Barbara's (01285 712692). Please note changes of dates and venues and let Eileen or Barbara know if you are unable to come.

Denny Rawlinson  
01285 711009

### Birdwatching

*Tuesday 19 July*

Our July visit is to Rutland Water near Oakham in Rutland. This trip can be done in the day but it means a very early start and a lot of driving. Most of the group have made their own arrangements to stay overnight. We shall meet at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre at Egleton at 9.30am. You will need to bring a packed lunch as they do not have a restaurant. There are two distinct walks and I envisage doing one in the morning, returning to our cars for lunch and then doing the other in the afternoon. There is another reserve area at Lyndon and those staying overnight may like to visit there independently (tree sparrows are almost guaranteed!). Both reserves close at 5pm but once in you can still get out. A day pass (covering both reserves) will cost £4.10 but car parking is free. Toilet facilities are available at both visitor centres.

There will be no meeting in August.

Richard Morgan  
01285 712085

## Book Circle 2

*Tuesdays 12 July and 9 August*

In July there is a change of venue and we shall meet at Anthea's house to discuss 'The White Queen' by Philippa Gregory.

In August we shall be at Iris's to discuss 'The Hare with Amber Eyes' by Edmund de Waal. Please let Miriam, Iris or me know if you will be unable to attend.

Kevin Hannigan 01367 250246  
hannigan100@hotmail.com  
Miriam Scott 01285 713441  
Anthea Wordley 01285 713545

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## Bridge Improvers

The group meets every Monday afternoon from 2-4 pm in the Heritage room, Fairford Community Centre, and will continue through the summer until further notice. All those who play bridge and would like to improve are welcome, partners and refreshments provided.

Margaret Bishop  
01285 713747  
[mbishop@talktalk.net](mailto:mbishop@talktalk.net)

## Chess

There will be no meetings in July and August.  
We shall start again on Wednesday 21 September, 3.30pm at Mike's house.

Mike Bennett  
01367 252379  
mish252379@btinternet.com

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## Cycling and pub lunch

*Wednesday 27 July and 17 August*

We shall head off towards The Barringtons on this ride. The previous time we went on this route we had a bit of drama with broken pedals and a few punctures. The only gentle climb is at the Sheepbridge; after that it is all downhill. On to Sherborne, up over the A40, past Lodge Park, then lunch will be taken at Aldsworth. Home will be assisted by a gentle breeze back into Coln, then we go our separate ways.

Meet at Fairford at 10.30am or we shall see you at Coln Post Office at 10.45am.

In **August** I will ring around to ascertain what riders are available nearer the time.

Paul O'Shaughnessy  
01367 850262

## Family History 1

*Wednesday 20 July*

We have had to postpone the visit to the Oxford History Centre, so we shall now meet in the Archive Room at the Community Centre at 2.30pm. Please let me know if you are unable to be there.

There will be no meeting in August.

Miriam Scott  
01285 713441

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## Five Rhythms Dance

*Wednesday 20 July*

### **Change of Venue**

In July our dance session will be held at Joyce's house in Poulton, on the lawn if dry or indoors if wet. Members are invited to bring a piece of music they would like to dance to, preferably between three and eight minutes long.

It has been suggested that we should take photos for the album, so it would be helpful to wear bright, strong colours for the event. Dancing will be followed by refreshments and for those who can stay longer I shall be showing a short video of Gabrielle Roth and her dancers.

Joyce Deane  
01285 851408

## Family History 2

There will be no meetings in July and August.

Michael Johnson  
[sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk)  
01285712637

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## French Conversation

### **Intermediate**

Salut tout le monde!

I should like to invite everyone to come to my house on Monday 11 July at 11am, so that we can plan together for future meetings. I do hope that you will all be able to be there. New members would be welcome to join this group; please contact me for more details.

A bientôt!

Rosemary Westlake  
01285 712329  
[idrwestlake@cotswoldwireless.co.uk](mailto:idrwestlake@cotswoldwireless.co.uk)

### **Advanced**

We start by reading a couple of pages from a magazine published for groups like ours, and then discuss matters arising from that, and anything else that takes our fancy! This is done in two small groups of generally not more than six people. New members are always welcome!

Kevin Hannigan  
01367 250246  
hannigan100@hotmail.com

## **Garden Group**

*Thursday 21 July and 18 August*

July's visit takes us to Trench Hill, Sheepscombe. As we have a distance to drive we shall meet in the Fairford car park just before 2pm so that we can leave as promptly as possible.

As I should like to let Mrs Hargrave know the numbers the week before our visit, please could you let me know **WHETHER YOU ARE COMING OR NOT** by **FRIDAY 15 JULY**.

As we have specifically requested this lady to open her garden I do hope you will come to make the numbers worthwhile for her.

The good news is that costs are less than last time with entry being £3 and tea and cake £2.50. I suggest that passengers contribute £2.50 towards travel costs.

Hope to see you on that day as I have been told it is a beautiful garden.

In **August** we are going to visit a community garden called TWIGS near Swindon based at Cheney Manor. This is a first for the group and I have been told that we shall find inspiration, peace and tranquility there as this is a garden designed to help people recover from stress and problems they may have been having.

They have eleven themed gardens, wildflower haven and crafts and are also opposite a garden centre so there should be plenty to do.

Please could we meet at Fairford car park in time to leave at 2pm so that we have time to enjoy the afternoon. I do not need any notice for this outing. However, it would be helpful to know whether you are coming or not so we don't leave without you.

There is no entry fee but they are happy to receive donations.

Penny Phillips  
01285 711360

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## **Geology**

The Geology group meets regularly at the Chapel in Milton Street on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm.

Clive Watson  
01285 713003

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## **German Circle**

Please contact Karin for further details.

Karin Forman  
01367 252675

## **Golf**

With regret we have to advise that nobody has come forward to replace John as leader of this Group, so, at least for the time being, there will be no further meetings.

However, if anyone is interested, do please contact me, details below, I would be very pleased to hear from you.

Michael Yorke  
01367 253286  
yorkey7@hotmail.co.uk

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## **Keep Fit**

We meet each Tuesday at 9.15am at Fairford Community Centre.

Eddie Rosser  
01367 252504

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## **Latin**

*Thursday 7 July and 4 August*

The group will meet at 2.30pm at my house. Please contact me if you are unable to come.

Susan Greig  
01285 810274

## **Model Group**

The Model group meets each Thursday morning.

For further details please contact:

Jim Sullivan  
01367 252539

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## **Music Listening**

*Friday 15 July*

Geoff Bishop will be treating us to a concert of his choice of music.

There will be no meeting in August.

Mary Chick  
01285 712126

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## **Needlework**

The Needlework group will meet on July 6 and 20, August 3, 17 and 31 at the Chapel.

For further details please contact:

Thelma Hardie  
01285 713971

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*Giant Tortoises*

*These Galapagos giants are all legendary.*

*From island to island, their shapes seem to vary.*

*Attached to their bones, on their backs are their homes, shells that are shaped like saddles or domes.*

## Pétanque

The group meets each Wednesday from 10-12noon in the car park of St Thomas's Catholic Church in Horcott Road, except for the first Wednesday of each month when we shall play at The Red Lion, Castle Eaton.

Our next venture will be 30 July, when we shall be playing in a melee, made up with teams from Ampney Crucis and Cirencester. By playing on the piste in St Michael's we are now aware of the surface we shall have to adapt to.

New members are always welcome.

Heather Baber  
01285 711343

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## Philosophy

*Wednesday 29 July*

The next meeting will be at Manus Moran's house in Marston Meysey. The subject will be 'Courage'.

There will be no meeting in August.

Dan Deane  
01285 851408

## Poetry Circle 1

The Poetry Circle meets on the first Friday of the month.

For further information contact:

Keith Cottam  
01285 711054

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## Poetry Circle 2

We met on 1st July with poems about Celebration.

*Friday 5 August*

We shall bring our favourite poems to Maureen's home.

For enquiries please phone:

Mary Chick  
01285 712126

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## Postcard Group

*Tuesday 19 July*

The next meeting will be held at my house at 2.30pm. The alphabetical theme will continue with cards for the letter 'C' (six cards maximum). I shall also give a short talk on 'postcards of my river'.

There will be no meeting in August, but we shall meet again on 20 September.

John Higgs  
01285 712488

## Recorders

Our dates for July are Fridays the 8th and 22nd (which will be our end of term) when we are lucky enough to have Ann Marshall conducting us.

Please come if you possibly can as I'm sure it will be a very enjoyable experience. As usual, we'll be starting with our treble class from 2-2.30pm followed by the main group at 2.30 to finish at 4.30. We'll start off in the Heritage room though, if there are enough of us, we'll move to the Farmor room on the ground floor of the Fairford Community Centre.

If there are any more recorder players who would like to join a friendly, non-judgemental group, we have some spare instruments we could lend you.

Hilary Bradshaw  
01793 720037  
hilary@burytown15.co.uk  
Jay Mathews  
01367 253510

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*Galapagos Flightless Cormorants  
Their necks are sinewy and long.  
Their feet are webbed and very strong.  
But something is completely wrong.  
Those tattered wings just don't belong*

## Rummikub

*Thursday 11 August*

The group meets on the second Thursday of each month at our house in Lechlade from 2-4.30pm for some friendly games of Rummikub. New members will be welcome.

THE GROUP WILL NOT MEET IN JULY. We shall meet on 11 August.

For further information or explanation please refer to the Fairford U3A website or telephone me.

Mary Bennett  
01367 253287

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## Spanish

There will be no meetings until September as there are so many holiday arrangements in the interim.

Future dates will be announced in the Newsletter.

Frank Hall  
01285 712583  
fkhall@talktalk.net

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*continued*

## Straddlers

*Thursday 21 July*

A delightful walk through sun-kissed meadows and leafy woods, along mud free paths. We start at Ewepen Buildings car park, just off the A40 on the Sherborne Estate, then we amble into the village. A gentle stroll across fields will take us to Windrush Mill, then on to Manor Farm and Century Wood. Deer and wild flowers are usually in abundance here. Lunch will be taken hereabouts so coffee and cool drinks are necessary given the warm day. The return will be via Sherborne Park itself. Around eight miles is the intended distance; with the chat and the views it will seem a lot less.

Leave Fairford car park at 9.30am or meet up at the Ewepen Buildings car park at 10am.

Suggested passenger fee is £1.50.

Paul O'Shaughnessy  
01367 850262

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## Short Tennis

Short Tennis takes place in the Palmer Hall on Mondays, starting at 3.30pm.

If you are interested please contact me or come to a session and find out more.

Margaret Trickett  
01285 712421

*Thursday 18 August*

The August walk begins in Kingston Lisle where we take a well defined footpath towards Westcot. From here we follow a quiet road for a short distance until we climb a wide track leading to the Ridgeway. The climb is steady along the ridge to the summit of White Horse Hill and the Iron Age hill fort known as Uffington Castle. The White Horse itself is believed to be the oldest hill figure in Britain. If the weather is kind we shall be able to enjoy some of the best views in the area while we eat our lunch. The climb has provided us with our just reward now and we head off downhill to the pretty village of Woolstone. The footpath from here follows field boundaries and copses to Fowler. There is a final push up the road to Kingston Lisle and the welcome sight of the Blowing Hole Inn for those of us who might need R&R after this 9 mile walk.

Meet at Fairford car park at 9.15am or in Kingston Lisle by the cemetery at 10am with the usual refreshments. Suggested passenger rate is £2.50.

Tony Clarke  
01285 712794

Group Leader: John Burrows

## Striders

*Tuesday 26 July*

Our walk is based on Painswick, and will start from the Falcon Inn opposite the church in the centre of the town. The car park entrance is a small alley alongside the hotel.

The route will take us via field paths, tracks and lanes to the summit of Painswick Beacon where we should get magnificent views over the surrounding countryside.

The walk is undulating but the ascents are not strenuous and from the Beacon the route joins the Cotswold Way for an easy descent back into the town for lunch.

Total distance is about 6 miles.

Travel distance from Fairford is approximately 25 miles so a passenger fee of £3.50 is suggested.

Depart Fairford at 9.15am for a 10am start at Painswick.

Alan and Gaynor Williams.  
01367 252052

*Tuesday 23 August*

We start from The Plough Inn at Ford, on the B4077, GL54 5RU, near Temple Guiting; parking across the road from the pub. Head off to Cutsdean and up a long steady climb (but I don't do hills!) past Cutsdean Lodge to a plantation and then back down past Ford Hill farm, up another shorter climb (Arrggh!) through Jackdaw's Castle and the gallops to come back into the car park, and an excellent lunch – asparagus being a speciality. About 6 miles – just a few easy stiles – 2¾ hours and on a fine day great views from the top of the downs. A combination of fields, paths and tarmac – walking boots, as always, strongly recommended.

It's about 30 miles and so the cost to passengers will be £4.50. Please aim to leave Fairford car park at 9am to arrive at the pub by 9.45 to pre-order lunch. I will meet you at the pub.

Kevin Hannigan  
hannigan100@hotmail.com  
01367250246

Group Leader: Phil Trickett

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*Galapagos Flightless Cormorants continued*

*The female is the architect  
And builder of the nest.  
The male supplies the flotsam.  
The female does the rest.*

## Strollers

*Friday 22 July*

This month our walk will be around some of the Ampneys. Meet at the Fairford car park at 9.40am, or at The Crown of Crucis at 10am.

We shall not be meeting in August, but will resume on Friday 23 September with a walk in the Fairford area and opportunity to support the Macmillan's Coffee Morning.

Don Cobbett  
01285 712692

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## Traditional Jazz

*Thursday 4 August*

THE GROUP WILL NOT MEET IN JULY. We shall next meet on Thursday 4 August but we shall not meet in September.

The group meets on the first Thursday of each month at our house in Lechlade from 2-4.30pm.

Ian Bennett  
01367 253287  
ian@bennettm.gotadsl.co.uk

## Walking & Pub Lunch

*Wednesday 13 July*

A gentle stroll through a delightful village in the middle of summer on a nice warm day. We shall amble across some meadows, dawdle through some woods, pick up a bit of history, a little geology, walk where the Romans trod. One gentle incline, more downhills - all before lunch!

Meet at Fairford car park at 9.40am or we shall see you at The Victoria Inn at Eastleach at 10am. Suggested fee £1.00.

Paul O'Shaughnessy  
01367 850262

There will be a break during August but we shall walk as usual on Wednesday 14 September. Many thanks to the good people who have led the walks for the past few months.

Group Leader: Geoff Bishop  
01285 713747  
[gbishop@talktalk.net](mailto:gbishop@talktalk.net)

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## Yoga

The Yoga group meets each Monday in the Community Centre at 10.15am.

Gillian Bilbrough  
01285 712579

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Grateful thanks to Barbara Cobbett who supplied the Galapagos quotes this month from Ruth Heller's 'Galapagos Means Tortoises'.

# GROUP REVIEWS

## A Visit to Highgrove Gardens

We emerged from the coach in great excitement, and were greeted by our volunteer guide to Highgrove Gardens. We started in the Orchard Room, a welcoming reception area, where we had a brief introduction, then began our tour. We soon realised that there are many different gardens within the grounds, all designed to provide wonderful views in every direction. Each has its own story, individual features and surprises.

Some of our favourites were the imposing Lime Avenue, the serene Lily Pool Garden, and the beautiful Wild Flower Meadow. The Stumpery has a special surprise as two small classical temples and a tree house appear amongst the ferns. The Orchards lead into the spacious and productive Walled Garden, where vegetables and fruit provide many of the household's needs.

After the beautiful Azalea walk, and among the acers in the Arboretum we found the Sanctuary, built to mark the Millennium and designed as a place of contemplation. Close to Highgrove House, we strolled along the Terrace and Thyme Walk, through the Rose Pergola and round the beautiful Carpet Garden.

All along the two hour walk, our Guide pointed out the water features and fountains, and described many special unusual features, many of them gifts from visitors and friends from all over the world. There was just time at the end for a delicious cream tea and a visit to the shop... Well, it was rather special!

Jean Crowley

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*'HRH The Prince of Wales has spent 30 years transforming the grounds of Highgrove into what have been acknowledged as some of the most inspired and innovative gardens in the United Kingdom.*

*His Royal Highness's strict adherence to organic and sustainable methods has helped create gardens which are both magical and intriguing while being environmentally sound; encouraging both plants and wildlife to thrive.'*

[www.highgrovegardens.com/](http://www.highgrovegardens.com/)

## Book Circle 1

'The Warden' by Anthony Trollope, our choice for June was, for most of the members, a nostalgic re-read. This is the first novel in the Barchester Towers series. The story introduces us to some of the characters who will be more fully investigated in following books, such as Archdeacon Grantly and his father the Bishop.

As Henry James says "this is a story of an old man's conscience", an account of a man with the moral dilemma he faces when accused of living on an income of £800 per annum which perhaps should have been distributed to the occupants of the almshouse to which he has been appointed Warden. He performs his duties in caring for the old men in the Hospital beyond the call of duty, and listens to their troubles, tends their illnesses and gives them comfort. It is difficult to think that any other person could fulfil the Warden's duties so well.

The accuser is John Bold, a surgeon who is determined to reform the running of the Hospital. The story is complicated by the fact that he is in love with the Warden's beloved daughter Eleanor, thereby jeopardising his chance of marrying her by upsetting her father.

The Warden is determined to be fair to his old friends and resigns from his position. The sad fact is that even by doing this the inmates of the Hospital do not benefit personally from the £800 per annum which the Warden relinquishes and they lose the care and friendship of a man who truly was their champion.

Although relationships with the Archdeacon and Bold were somewhat fractured during the story, hurt feelings gradually fade and are healed. The wonderful friendship between the Bishop and the Warden continues and Eleanor eventually marries John Bold.

Sheila Morgan

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*'Dance with a girl three times, and if you like the light of her eye and the tone of voice with which she, breathless, answers your little questions about horseflesh and music about affairs masculine and feminine, then take the leap in the dark.'*

Anthony Trollope

## Family History

A combined meeting of both groups received a fascinating talk given by Mrs Fanny Hugill who described her time in the WRNS during the Second World War.

After joining up in 1939 with her friend she was posted to Head Office in Westminster in the secretarial pool. Although this gave her plenty of time to enjoy London it was unfulfilling work. However, in 1942 Fanny was sent to Dover College where she became a "plotter" working in the tunnels under Dover Castle. The plotting room was a very busy place as everything that moved in the Channel was plotted on the wall chart in the ops room and updated every two minutes. There were three Wrens on each watch, one to man the telephone (usually Fanny's role) another to plot and the third to read the messages.

In 1943 Fanny was sent to Greenwich to train as an officer. Following this she was transferred to Norfolk House, St James' Square, London where she became PA to Capt. William Tennant who was appointed by Admiral Ramsay to take charge of Dunkirk.

In 1944 all the staff were moved to Southwick Park, Portsmouth, where Fanny once again worked in the ops room. This was extremely busy and exciting with many important names of the time coming in and out to view progress. Fanny was also on duty on the night of the invasion in June 1944. She was then sent to the Cherbourg peninsula where they occupied premises previously used by the Germans who had left them in a very dirty state. VE Day saw Fanny in Paris, following which she was moved to Minden in Germany as part of the headquarters staff.

Our thanks once again to Fanny for such an interesting afternoon full of so many of her incredible memories.

Madeline Phillips

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*The WRNS was formed in 1917 and by the end of the World War 1 had 5,500 members. It was disbanded in 1919. It was revived in 1939 at the beginning of the Second World War, with an expanded list of allowable activities, including flying transport planes. At its peak in 1944 it had 75,000 people. During the war there were 100 deaths. One of the slogans used in recruiting posters was 'Join the Wrens—free a man for the fleet'.*

*From Wikipedia*

## Garden Group

We set off from Fairford car park in the sun which was such a treat as the forecast had not been good and the previous week's weather had been awful with non-stop wind and rain.

We were a smallish group of six ladies and three men which was unusual as we are normally a ladies only group, but it was nice to welcome our new member John Woodard from Lechlade and two husbands! Our destination was Woolstone Mill at Uffington, a garden we had visited late last year. The present owners have lived there for 30 years and have transformed it during that time. They have made good use of their view to the White Horse with a large lawned area leading from the house to two large borders filled with roses and mixed colourful perennials on either side. Once through there we meandered towards the beehives which were very busy - no shortage of nectar for them - and then back across the meadow towards the permanently grazing sheep which are made out of wire with bodies of box - very realistic from a distance. We also enjoyed another trip to the wonderful treehouse and I think we all managed to climb up into it. It has a verandah with a view to the Horse as well as a most delightful thatched room - very African to look at. The whole thing is built over and into an extremely old willow tree and must be perfect for relaxing with a sundowner! We enjoyed our trip through the very productive vegetable area and resisted the temptation of the beautiful red raspberries as we knew we had tea ahead of us. This garden is interesting and fun as there are so many different areas to explore with the benefit of a stream running through it, so lots of moisture loving plants have been used along the banks, including the candelabra primulas which were still looking good and reflecting their different colours into the water.

We finished our visit with tea and a very delicious lemon cake in the garden room - think one or two of us could quite happily have eaten more!  
Penny Phillips

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*'Thomas Hughes, the author of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays', was born in the village of Uffington and wrote about the White Horse and the village. He described how the villagers cared for the White Horse by 'scouring the horse' every seven years or so.'*

[www.lhi.org.uk/projects\\_directory/](http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/)

## Pétanque

As well as our Castle Eaton game this month we have also visited Cirencester and played on the new piste in St Michael's Park. We had good weather for this game and were treated to a lovely ploughman's lunch by Graham and Jenny for which we say a big thankyou.

Playing in Cirencester has made us even more determined to have our own piste here in Fairford and we have started the ball rolling with a very promising meeting with Jonathan Stebbings from the Ernest Cook Trust.

Heather Baber

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## Philosophy

The subject for June was the "The ink of the Scholar is worth more than the Blood of the Martyr". Bula led the discussion with the example of the Tudor Catholic martyr, Margaret of Clitheroe. This working class woman was condemned to death having been accused of giving comfort to fellow Catholics. The subsequent records of the event were much publicised and it could be considered that this was as important to her fame as her actual demise. Bula's point was that both the martyrdom and the record carried equal value. Another view was that a scholar's work can, by the introduction of fresh ideas, initiate considerable change just by publication at a suitably receptive time. We dealt briefly with current events such as self immolation in Tunisia and the use of mobile phones in lieu of the written word.

Dan Deane

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## Walking & Pub Lunch

Where was everybody in June? Was it the weather forecast or the trip to Highgrove later that day?

After unexpectedly easy parking, just six of us set off from Northleach, and had just one short shower on our way to the church in Hampnett. After stopping there we went out into the fields for a chat with the farmer moving his bulls to service different sections of his herd; then on to the Reservoir, and back into Northleach for an excellent lunch at the Sherborne Arms.

Kevin Hannigan

## Poetry Group One

Every meeting of the circle has its own character and the one in June held at Barbara and Keith's, was no exception. The hosts had decided that they would choose a solid, prosaic subject and 'Furniture & fittings' could not be seen as in any respect ethereal. The opening poem, oddly titled 'Divorce', by Kate Bingham, portrayed a happy marriage reflected in the wardrobe mirror. Alison followed, amusingly with 'The table and the chair' by Edward Lear, known and loved far and wide, and which with John's reading of Pam Ayres's 'A tale of two settees' provided a lighter touch to the afternoon.

As often, there were readings from our favourite poets, Hardy, Betjeman, Larkin and Seamus Heaney whose poem 'A sofa in the Forties' read by Rosemary brought back memories of childhood games played on items of furniture. Kay's own work, 'Harrods', delighted us all as did Ian's nostalgic poem reflecting his experiences as a furniture maker. He followed this by reading 'The escritoire, a singular metamorphosis' by Harold Nemerov, an American West Coast writer, which, it was generally agreed, was not only 'singular' but suggested it may have been the result of some proscribed substance. All in all an afternoon that, yet again, took on its own particular flavour.

Barbara and Keith Cottam

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## Birdwatching

It is a pleasure to visit the Nagshead RSPB reserve in the Forest of Dean at any time of the year as the huge oak trees are magnificent in all seasons. If, however, you want to see birds don't go in June as the young have fledged and all are in the high canopy way out of sight. We found this on our recce so decided to change our plans and go somewhere closer to home.

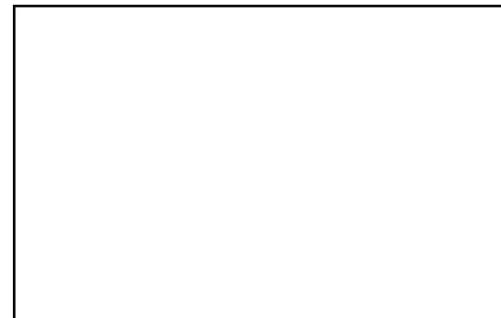
We chose the National Trust water meadows at Sherborne as this walk takes in quite a variety of habitat. We had a most enjoyable walk but found surprisingly few birds apart from flocks of swallows, martins and swifts swooping and wheeling as they hunted for insects. It was also nice to see a good number of house sparrows round the farm buildings near the car park. A marsh tit was a good find.

Richard Morgan

## Timetable of Group Activities

Monthly: Chess on a Wednesday. Needlework and Recorders meet twice monthly. Pétanque and Cycling April-October only.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<b>Monday</b> am	French Yoga	French Yoga	French Yoga	French Yoga
pm	Bridge Short tennis	Bridge Short Tennis	Bridge Short Tennis	Bridge Short Tennis
<b>Tuesday</b> am	Keep Fit	Keep Fit Spanish	Keep Fit Bird watching	Keep Fit Spanish Striders
pm	Main meeting	Book Circle 1 Book Circle 2	Postcards	
<b>Wednesday</b> am	Pétanque	Walking & PL Pétanque	Five Rhythms Pétanque	Cycling & PL Pétanque
pm		Geology	Family History 1 Family History 2 Philosophy	Chess
<b>Thursday</b> am	Model Boats	Model making	Model Boats Straddlers	Model Boats
pm	Latin Traditional Jazz	Rummikub	Garden	
<b>Friday</b> am				Strollers
pm	Poetry Circle Poetry Two	Recorders	Music	Recorders



Please send items for the  
**September**  
 issue to Alison Hobson email:  
 alisonmhobson@googlemail.com  
 01285 711768  
 no later than  
**Thursday**  
**25th August**