



Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 176

September 2011



A look at Stained Glass
by Richard Cann

General Meetings

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm

4 October

The battle to defeat Malaria
by Malcom Cutler

1 November

History alive
by Steve Williams

6 December

A Victorian Family's Musical
Christmas
by Mike and Pat Ledbury

Today, 6 September

Richard Cann will give us an introduction to the use of glass in medieval church architecture – the making of medieval glass and the iconography and symbolism incorporated when illustrating biblical stories or the lives of saints – with references to Gloucester Cathedral and Fairford St. Mary's.

In October Malcolm Cutler will talk on Malaria, which accounts for over a million deaths each year, with one child dying every 30 seconds.

In November Steve Williams will give us an insight into a soldier's life in the trenches.

Tea Rota

October 4 : Bridge
November 1 : Chess
December 6 : Cycling

October Concert at St Mary's Church, Fairford p4

Fairford and Lechlade Libraries p5

New leaders wanted for Golf p9 and Yoga p14

Another incident at Horcott Lake! p21

Shop at Waitrose in October to raise money for our U3A
Pétanque Group's fundraising effort for their new piste in
Walnut Tree Field, Fairford p22

Walking in Umbria

We are planning an H.F. Walking holiday in Umbria next September (2012). If anyone would like to join us to make it a group holiday please get in touch.

Phil & Margaret Trickett 01285 712421
Ian & Rosemary Westlake 01285 712329

Gardens in August

Thank you to all the gardeners who opened their gardens to members for our August meeting. The nine gardens were greatly admired and members were impressed by the knowledge of their owners.

Thank you also for the delicious cakes donated by members; they were greatly appreciated and added to the enjoyment of the afternoon.

Gaynor Williams

Secretary's Notes

Anyone who has not been contacted by the secretary regarding diaries for 2012 and would like one should place an order with Peter Evans.

01285 713069

Keith Cottam

Members will be saddened to hear of the death of Keith Cottam. His erudition, wisdom, common sense and droll sense of humour will be sorely missed by many. Our sincere condolences to Barbara and the family.

See also Poetry Circle 1 page 10

AH

U3A July and August

There are two meetings to report, both of which exemplified the mystery and beauty of the world around us. In July Ged Cassell talked about the Galapagos Islands and the unique reptiles, mammals and birds found there. With his engaging manner he turned what might have been just another slide show into an enjoyable account of how the isolation of these islands and the uniqueness of their wildlife prompted Darwin to develop his theory of evolution after a visit in the early 1830s.

For the social event in August nine members opened their gardens and provided much pleasure, and many fresh ideas to those who wandered in the fierce heat and who, at times, gratefully sipped cool drinks on shady patios. Friendships seemed to broaden and many a promise was made to exchange cuttings or roots in the autumn. To round off the afternoon, tea and generous quantities of cakes, donated by members, were served in the courtyard of the Community Centre. The whole affair was organised by Gaynor Williams. Sincere thanks must go to her and her helpers and the garden owners who have developed interesting garden plans and worked hard, in this very dry 'early' season, to display such a show of flowers, fruits, and vegetables.

Sylvia Jones

An Evening and Afternoon of Music and Songs at St Mary's Church Fairford on 28-29 October 2011

The Newchurch Male Voice Choir, from the Isle of Wight, supported by the local Coln Church Choir with organists John Read and Ann Crowe, will be giving performances at St Mary's Church Fairford at 7pm on Friday 28th October and Saturday 29th October at 2pm. Tickets £5 adults (under 18 free) available from Fairford Post Office and Lechlade Newsagents from mid-September or on the door. Proceeds to St Mary's Church Maintenance Fund. Wheelchair access and toilets in the Community Centre. Do come and join us in our lovely Church with its now restored stained glass windows.

Enquiries to Robert Dean 01285 712519

Fairford and Lechlade Libraries

As everyone is aware the Gloucestershire County Library Service is short-funded. Hardly any new books have been bought to replenish stocks. If you have any book, published 2010 and later, that you are willing to donate, Fairford Library would be glad to receive them, on the understanding that they will use them as they see fit. Books must be as pristine as possible, and the subject matter suitable for the open shelves. New opening hours at Fairford Library start October 3rd: Monday & Wednesday, 9.30-5, Thursday 9.30-7 and Saturday 9.30-1.

Lechlade Town Council's Library Working Group are setting up a new charity Friends of the Lechlade Library so that they will be ready to take on the running of the library should the courts decide that the County's decision to close the library is valid. They are appealing for volunteers to man the library and we will be hoping for donations of books from the community to help keep the stock up to date. We will also encourage donations via a Friends of the Library Scheme to help finance the running costs. There is some information on the website www.lechladeonthames.co.uk.

An Inviting Opportunity from HOST

People come from all over the world to study at universities in the UK. Apart from gaining academic qualifications, they hope to immerse themselves in the life, language and culture of this country; only to find that the university is not the best place to achieve this. The 'real Britain' is found outside the campus, in towns and villages, and, above all, in people's homes. Hosting a student for one weekend, or at Christmas, or just for a day, makes a personal and meaningful contribution to international understanding and goodwill. U3A members make ideal hosts! If you would like to know more, please visit www.hostuk.org, or call HOST's local organiser for Gloucestershire, Lynette Chappin, on 02920 693903.

HOST is a national charity founded in 1987 by the British Council, the Victoria League and the Foreign Office. Hosting students is a voluntary activity.

HOST UK Unit 8 Water House, 8 Orsman Road, London N1 5QJ
Telephone: 020 7739 6292 Fax: 0207 033 6539 www.hostuk.org.uk

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 for further information

Biography

Friday 21 October

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

Birdwatching

Tuesday 20 September

This month we shall see what we can find in the Frampton on Severn area. Meet at Fairford car park at 9am. We shall have lunch at a local pub. Frampton is 30 miles from Fairford.

Richard Morgan
01285 712085

Book Circle 1

Tuesday 13 September

Our next meeting is at Edna's home in Kempsford when we have chosen yet another Dunmore, 'The Betrayal'.

Sadly I will not be there but shall certainly read the book.

Please let Edna know on 01285 810717 if you are unable to come.

Denny Rawlinson
01285 711009

Book Circle 2

Tuesday 13 September

We shall meet at Jean's house at 2.30pm to discuss 'Mr Chartwell' by Rebecca Hunt. Please let Jean know (not me as I shall be away!) if you are unable to attend.

Kevin Hannigan
01367 250246
hannigan100@hotmail.com
Jean Moulden
01285 713308

Bridge Improvers

Bridge is a fascinating and absorbing game which offers challenge and excitement and keeps the mind alert and active without being physically demanding. The group is not suitable for beginners, but for anyone with some knowledge of the game who wants to improve.

We usually have a lesson, based on the Standard English (Acol) system, followed by practice play and friendly discussion. We expect to make lots of mistakes but hope to learn from them. We meet in the Heritage room at Fairford Community Centre, every Monday afternoon from 2 to 4 pm, and the cost is £1 per session which includes tea/coffee and biscuits.

Margaret Bishop
01285 713747
mbishop@talktalk.net

Chess

Wednesday 21 September

The next meeting will be at 3.30pm at Mike's house.

Mike Bennett
01367 252379
mish252379@btinternet.com

Cycling and pub lunch

Wednesday 21 September

For the final ride of the season we shall have a little cruise out to The Bakers Arms at South Cerney, cycling via Meysey Hampton, Cerney Wick and Ashton Keynes. The return will be through Down Ampney. This will be all on flat quiet lanes in pleasant sunshine, with not too great a distance.

Meet at Fairford car park at 10.30am.

Paul O'Shaughnessy
01367 850262

Family History 1

Wednesday 21 September

The meeting will be at my house at 2.30pm. Glenda will tell us about the interesting discoveries she has made about the history of her house. Please let me know if you are unable to be there.

We hope to arrange our postponed visit to the Oxford History Centre on 19 October, so please keep the day free.

Miriam Scott
01285 713441

Family History 2

Wednesday 21 September

The meeting will be at my house at 2.30pm. We shall look at wills and administrations.

We hope to arrange our postponed visit to the Oxford History Centre on 19 October, so please keep the day free.

Michael Johnson
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk
01285712637

Five Rhythms Dance

Wednesday 21 September

We regularly dance at the Palmer Hall on the third Wednesday of the month, at 10am. New dancers welcome.

Gillian Bilbrough
01285 712579

Joyce Deane
01285 851408

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

French Conversation

Intermediate

Salut les amis! J'espère que vous avez passé de bonnes vacances. Quant à moi, je n'ai pas eu de chance – me voilà, l'épaule droite cassée! Désolée, mais pas de rendez-vous chez moi pour l'instant. Comme on dit en anglais, 'Watch this space !'

Rosemary Westlake
01285 712329
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

German Circle

Please contact Karin for further details.

Karin Forman
01367 252675

Garden Group

Thursday 15 September

This month we are staying in Fairford to visit Pat Harwood's and Jean Moulden's gardens. We shall start at Pat's at 2.30pm and move on to Jean's where we shall have tea and chat!

If you need any directions please give me a ring.

Penny Phillips
01285 711360

Golf

If anyone is interested in continuing the Golf group, please contact me, details below. I should be very pleased to hear from you.

Michael Yorke
01367 253286
yorkey7@hotmail.co.uk

Keep Fit

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

Eddie Rosser
01367 252504

Latin

The group meets on the first Thursday of the month 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

Music Listening

Friday 16 September

We shall be sharing our choice of music relating to 'Colour'.

Mary Chick
01285 712126

Needlework

The Needlework group will meet on September 14 and 28, at the Chapel.

For further details please contact:

Thelma Hardie
01285 713971

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.

New members are always welcome.

Heather Baber
01285 711343

Philosophy

Wednesday 21 September

Our next meeting will be at my house in Poulton when the subject will be 'Imagination'.

Dan Deane
01285 851408

Poetry Circle 1

Keith Cottam will be greatly missed in the poetry group. He had been a member for many years and its leader for the past ten. He had a phenomenal knowledge of all aspects of poetry and would quietly dispense snippets of background information on the poems we read, as if he was reminding us of something we already knew. He often added a classical dimension to our mundane subject titles by reading from ancient works, leaving us in no doubt about the importance of reading widely.

He had a subtle sense of humour which put us at our ease. Once, after I had read one of my poems, he said 'that might be one of your better poems'.

Ian Westlake

Poetry Circle 2

We met on 2nd September when our theme was Cities. The group meets on the first Friday of the month.

For enquiries please phone:

Mary Chick
01285 712126

Postcard Group

Tuesday 20 September

The next meeting will be held at my house at 2.30pm. The alphabetical theme will continue with the letter 'D' (six cards maximum) and there will be a short presentation on 'Piers of the Realm'.

John Higgs
01285 712488

Recorders

We start again on Friday, 9th September with our second meeting on Friday 23rd. As usual, we'll be starting with our treble class (everyone welcome) from 2-2.30pm followed by the main group at 2.30 to finish at 4.30. We'll be 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
jaymathews124@mac.com

Rummikub

Thursday 8 September

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.

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

Mary Bennett
01367 253287

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

Spanish

I intend to re-start Spanish lessons on Tuesday 27th September at 11 am at my home and continue to have meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

Frank Hall
01285 712583
fkhall@talktalk.net

Straddlers

Thursday 15 September

The September walk has been chosen mindful of those walkers who dislike hills. The route will be a meander on and around The Thames Path and is consequently predominantly level with some minor undulations through adjacent pastures. The distance will be approximately 8 miles taking in Buscot and Kelmscot and possibly Inglesham depending on the weather and energy levels.

We shall start from Lechlade Memorial Hall car park at 10am so those travelling from Fairford car park should aim to depart at 9.45am. Suggested passenger fees would be the minimal charge of £1.

Alan and Gaynor Williams.
01367 252052

Striders

Tuesday 27 September

This month's Striders walk starts from The Fossebridge Inn, GL54 3JS (GR 080112). It's a little more expensive than some pubs we've been to but the food and service are excellent!

We turn up the track just to the south of the Inn towards the village of Fossebridge, then left along the valley past Pancake Hill,

Greenhill Farm and Calveshill, keeping to the north east of Chedworth. From the top of the hill we turn eastwards, through Chedworth Woods to Yanworth Mill. (We've walked this section recently but in the opposite direction.) We continue generally eastwards past Stowell Mill then southwards through part of the Stowell Estate, joining the Fosse Way about 50 yards north of the Inn.

Total distance is a little less than six miles. It is unlikely to be muddy but some of the fields have quite long grass so gaiters advised if we have had recent rain. There is one steepish decent just at the end, otherwise it's a gently undulating walk, but there are a number of stiles and gates.

Meet at Fairford car park at 9.30am or at The Fossebridge Inn ready for a 10.15 start. Lunch can be pre-ordered.

Fossebridge is just 10 miles from Fairford so a £1.50 passenger contribution is suggested.

Contact information
Mike Bennett
01367 252379
Group Leader: Phil Trickett

Strollers

Friday 23 September

Although this year our September walk does not coincide with the Macmillan Coffee Morning at Fairford Bowls Club (that's on the 30th), we shall be walking in the Fairford area. We have planned to have lunch at The Eight Bells. Meet either in Fairford Car Park at 9.50am, or at The Eight Bells at 10am.

Friday 28 October

Ann and Judith will be leading this walk – details next month.

Friday 25 November

Our last walk of the year which we make a Christmas walk. As our previous venue, The Bridge, has closed, we shall be going to the newly refurbished Bull Hotel in Fairford. We have been promised seats in one of the 'new' areas. They would like our orders in advance and I shall have menus available at the U3A main meetings – last date for ordering: Tuesday 6 November.

A warmish day in August and I'm writing about Christmas already!

Don Cobbett
01285 712692
dbcobbett@tiscali.co.uk

Walking & Pub Lunch

Wednesday 14 September

A relatively untaxing but hopefully enjoyable walk, just two very gentle inclines; no mandatory stiles (there is one but it is incorporated with a useable gate!) and good wide tracks for the most part to encourage the customary social contact associated with our walking groups!

The walk is around 4 miles, discovering the Ampneys. A kind of irregular circle, starting at Poulton, through farmland, wheat and corn fields, tree lined tracks, and country lanes until we cross the main Fairford/Cirencester road at Ampney St Peter, then through the village, back into the country and on to Ampney St Mary, then a pleasant walk via country lanes and farm track, back to Poulton.

Meet at Fairford Car Park at 9.40am, or we shall see you at 10am in the car park of the Falcon Inn at Poulton, where we shall order lunch as required before setting out.

Suggested passenger fee is £1.50

I shall look forward to seeing you.

Michael Yorke
01367 253286

Group Leader: Geoff Bishop
01285 713747

Traditional Jazz

The Group did not meet in September, but we shall meet again on 6th October when we shall listen to recordings made by some of the musicians who were at the September Bude Jazz Festival.

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

Yoga

Sadly, due to continuing back pain I am unable to continue as leader of the yoga group. If there is someone who feels they would like to lead this group please get in touch. Otherwise yoga will no longer continue for the time being.

Gillian Bilbrough
01285 712579

From On Fayrford Windowes

*'I know of no paynt or poetry
Can mend such colourd Imag'ry
In sullen inke: yet Fayrford, I
May relish thy fayre memory.*

*Such is the Ecchoes fainter sound,
Such is the light when sunne is drowned;
So did the fancy looke upon*

*The worke before it was begunne:
Yet when those shewes are out of sight
My weaker colours may delight.*

*Those Images so faithfully
Report true feature to the eye
As you may thinke each picture was
Some visage in a looking-glass;
Not a glasse-window face, unless
Such as Cheapside hath: when a presse
Of paynted gallants looking out
Bedecke the Casement round about:'*

William Strode (1600-45)

GROUP REVIEWS

Biography Group

We met in August to discuss the choices of our members – none of which we enjoyed!

'PG Wodehouse' by Robert McCrum. He went to Dulwich College and lived the rest of his life wishing he was still there. He was interned in France during WW2, and disgraced himself by making a broadcast for the Germans extolling how well he was being treated. Perhaps because his father lost all his money he did not follow his brother to university and spent the rest of his life concerned about money and in regular trouble with tax authorities. Eventually he worked for a time in Hollywood, and in 1975, a few months before his death; he joined several of his forebears by being knighted. Our view was a well-written book about a boring man!

'The Two of Us' by Sheila Hancock, tells of her life with John Thaw. They came from very different backgrounds yet eventually forged a good life together, interrupted by a period apart when his depression and heavy drinking made him impossible. Warned that he faced an early death he managed, with help, to effect a cure in just a week. He was regularly having to apologise for his behaviour – sometimes by buying a house! His favourite was in France (good choice!). Our reviewer found the writing style of two parallel paths – her story coupled with his final months - distracting from what might otherwise have been a fascinating tale of the "boy made good".

Hitch-22: a memoir' by Christopher Hitchens. Our reviewer felt that he had almost been living his life in a series of roles as the "real" Hitch never seemed to get revealed. A prolific writer who spent the 60's and 70's as a war correspondent and saw himself in the role of freedom fighter. Good friends with Martin Amis, he lived a life of borderline debauchery for many years – always being the hero in his eyes. Even when being self critical he was heroic! Very articulate, the book suffers from his inability to steer a course and to edit out his ramblings, and world class name-dropping. He might not like the description, but the impression was of a polemicist....usually about himself!

Kevin Hannigan

Birdwatching

Our long drive to Rutland Water was most successful and we were rewarded with an excellent tally of species. The bird reserves we visited stretch along nine miles of the shore of this huge reservoir. Nothing is natural but as part of the original reservoir project some of the shore was set aside for nature and a series of lagoons and scrapes constructed. The reserve is well served by a large number of hides, mostly large enough to give all eleven of our group good views in comfort.

As we worked our way round we got the feeling that as we entered each hide new species of birds were awaiting us and our tally grew rapidly. Most of these were water birds, waders and shore birds. Away from the water there were very few birds around, as is usual at this time of year. Among the morning highlights we saw both ringed and little ringed plovers, greenshank, green and common sandpipers, a flock of Egyptian geese and a lone black swan (presumably an escapee, not a vagrant from Australia!).

After lunch we spent some time in the elevated viewing area above the visitor centre and had views of a scaup (a type of duck), a marsh harrier, a ruff and a spoonbill. We then drove round the lake to the other end of the reserve and took a long walk to the hide which overlooked an ospreys nest. The two chicks had just fledged and both they and their parents were very active. Further highlights included a yellow wagtail and a spotted sandpiper, a rare American vagrant wader. Altogether a very satisfactory day enjoyed by us all.

Richard Morgan

Book Circle 1

Our summer reading has been enjoyable and interesting, as we have delved into human reactions forced upon us by circumstances beyond our control.

In July we read 'House of Orphans' by Helen Dunmore, a favoured author after we had read 'The Siege' several years ago. Dunmore did not disappoint. She takes us to Finland in 1902 when the Russian Empire is enforcing a brutal policy to destroy individual freedom.

Eeva, the motherless only child of a Marxist revolutionary father, has spent her early years under his tutelage questioning what it means to belong to yourself. She has spent many nights in their scant apartment with her young friend Lauri, studying and also eavesdropping on radical revolutionary meetings.

When her father dies of consumption, a bitter disillusioned man, she is sent to the House of Orphans, a cruel insensitive institution deep in the forests of Finland. It is a harsh life for the children who can look forward only to lives of farm labouring or domestic service, if they survive the rigours of cold and malnutrition. Eeva does, and when sixteen is placed in the home of a kindly widowed doctor, who has attempted to meet the health needs of the children.

With good food and kindness Eeva blossoms and against his will the doctor falls in love with her. But Eeva's determination is to return to Helsinki and Lauri, which with the doctor's generous and unselfish help she manages to do. We are not told of Eeva's and Lauri's fate; they disappear in the long and bloody fight against Russian domination.

Dunmore's prose captivates us. It is never overwritten but gives acute psychological insights into her characters, haunting description of the landscape, and an examination of the nature of justice and political rage.

Our August book also places us in Eastern Europe. This time in the fading splendour of a Hungarian's General's castle in 1940. Two elderly gentlemen, once the closest of friends meet after 41 years, tracing the course of their now dead friendship. The wounded central character describes his betrayal and abandonment at the hands of his former beloved companion. His bitterness evaporates as he tells of his feelings and his guest is left wretched and full of remorse.

The story of the rediscovery of this book, 'Embers' by Sandor Marai, is as fascinating as the novel itself. Marai was a celebrated Hungarian author in the 1930s, but was persecuted by the Communists when they came to power after the war. His books were suppressed, even destroyed, and he was forced to leave his country. He found refuge, but not peace, in America. He committed suicide in San Diego in 1989. The story is told with dignity and sensitivity, but the language is fulsome and extravagant, most probably done in translation—still a poignant and moving tale.

Denny Rawlinson

Book Circle 2

July. 'The White Queen' by Philippa Gregory is the first in a new series entitled 'The Cousins' War' and is set amid the tumult and intrigue of the Wars of the Roses.

Internationally best-selling author Philippa Gregory brings this extraordinary family drama to vivid life through its women, beginning with Elizabeth Woodville known as the White Queen.

Elizabeth Woodville of the House of Lancaster is widowed when her husband is killed in battle. Aided and abetted by the ambition and witchcraft skills of her mother Jacquetta, Elizabeth seduces and marries in secret King Edward IV, of the family of the White Rose, the House of York. Violent conflict, betrayal and murder dominate Elizabeth's life, a woman whose two sons become the central figures in a mystery that has confounded historians for centuries - the Princes in the Tower, whose fate remains unknown to this day.

We had a lively discussion about this book being written in the present tense. Most enjoyed the book; it certainly jogged the memory regarding the history of that period.

Jean Moulden

August. The chosen book for August was 'The Hare with Amber Eyes' by potter turned author Edward de Waal.

The book is ostensibly the history of a collection of 264 netsuke, but it covers so much more - family, art, architecture, history, persecution, from Odessa to Impressionist Paris, the Ausschluss, the spread of Nazism and post war Japan.

Opinions amongst the members were very mixed - some found it very interesting but a bit heavy-going, one member actively disliked it, but others thoroughly enjoyed it, all of which made for lively and energetic discussion.

Iris Pierce

Cycling and pub lunch

July. It was a nice day for cycling, sunny and warm with a gentle breeze to help us up the inclines (not that there were any!). We also usually had a nice meal at Aldsworth, together with a very tasty glass of ale. However - we had four apologies and only one confirmation. Ian and I therefore had a chat, decided to go home to do other things and went our separate ways!

August. We arranged a ride in bright sunny weather. The upside was that the four of us assembled at Coln outside the post office. The downside was that we had all separately cruised downhill from Hatherop. The start of our planned ride took us through Hatherop! Mary, Alan and Phil were not happy bunnies! Anyway we glided up Sheepbridge hill, across the A40, down into Great Barrington, and then around into Aldsworth, a delightful long run took us past Lodge Park, to the Sherborne Arms, where lunch was taken outside in the garden. Very nice it was too. Off back towards Coln, where we split up in three directions. As we were separating a gentle drizzle began to fall, not enough to spoil the day, but sufficient for us to speed our way home.

Paul O'Shaughnessy

A Happy Old Age

*A little more tired at the close of the day
A little less anxious to have my own way
A little less care for gain or for gold
A little more zest for the days of old.
A broader view and a saner mind
A little more love for all mankind,
A little more love for the friends of youth,
A little more zeal for established truth.
A little more charity in my views,
A little less thrust for the latest news.
A little more leisure to sit and dream,
A little more real the things unseen.*

Anon from Stroud Congregational Church
magazine via Jane Pugh

Garden Group

July. Our group, including our new member Helen Donnellan, had a very pleasant drive over to Sheepscombe, near Painswick, to Trench Hill Gardens. The afternoon was warm and sunny and the countryside was beautiful with rolling hills and windy country lanes once we left the main road.

Celia Hargrave was there to meet and greet us and give us a potted history of how the garden has been developed from nothing in the twenty plus years that she and her husband have been there. We started by having a wander in the small wood on the hill behind the house from where there were lovely views to the valley below. This is probably best viewed in the Spring when the thousands of snowdrops they have planted are in flower. From there we wandered down a track to the main garden which is on a slope where borders and a very prolific vegetable garden flourish side by side. One of the feature shrubs at the top of the garden was a wedding cake tree otherwise known as a Cornus Controversa which is a most interesting shape (without any pruning apparently) next to which were some Spindleberry shrubs with their red berries. The garden is split up with various borders and hedges leading to a pond with plenty of wildlife in it and some ducks. Behind the pond was a buddleia walk in lovely shades of purple and mauve - not many butterflies though which was a surprise as they have a wild flower meadow and garden organically. There was also plenty of bronze fennel dotted about as it has been allowed to self seed freely in beds and on the gravel along with the purple stemmed honesty which was most attractive. We finished our afternoon with tea and cake in the garden, a few of us making some purchases to take home!

August - TWIGS. This meeting was, sadly, cancelled due to the heavy rain. Our venue would not normally have been open on a Thursday and would have involved one of the volunteers making themselves available in very unpleasant conditions which we didn't want to do. We certainly hope to visit on another occasion as this is a very interesting and worthwhile project.

I am sad to say that John Woodard, one of our new members, suffered a stroke at the beginning of August and is now in Cirencester Hospital for rehabilitation. According to his son he is very determined to improve so I know that we all wish him well for the future. I have sent him a card on behalf of the group.

Penny Phillips

Unprovoked Attack – Problem for Model Group

On June 16th at 11am a local resident described as a young white male launched an unprovoked attack on Jim Sullivan's white motor launch. The youngster approached the boat from behind and stamped on the stern filling it with water. The boat sank until just the bow was showing above the surface. Rescue services had to be called.

Observers had previously noticed this frustrated young male trying to establish territorial rights on other sections of the lake with limited success. He had no particular distinguishing features except a very long neck. It is assumed that with adrenalin flowing, his dander up and blurred vision caused by his recent conflicts he lost control and vented his frustration on Jim's boat.

Jim says that although his property was damaged and he has been under some stress caused by the incident he does not wish to press charges of criminal damage. He was quoted as saying, "Some youngsters are 'quackers' at this time of year and a certain tolerance is needed."

His boat, a veteran of many Southrop Fetes, was slowly dried out, electrics checked, and is declared fully recovered. It has been suggested he painted it in a different colour in the hope that his boat would not be so provocative.

Jim Sullivan's report embellished by Ian Westlake

Philosophy

July. Our meeting, held at Manus Moran's house, was on the subject of courage. Fortunately Manus was able to lead the discussion with a brief review of the subject, from the Greek Myths via various philosophers up to William James. The general discussion that followed agreed that courage can take many forms and one or two personal reminiscences were offered. Some individuals require courage to act against perceived group pressure. It was agreed that those who didn't feel fear could not be considered to be courageous. It was also thought that courage in an individual was not an unlimited quantity, and successive challenges reduce the ability to continue.

Dan Deane

Pétanque

On 30th July, 14 of our members were welcomed into St. Michael's Park for a melee with a team from Cirencester U3A and a team from Ampney Crucis. The melee was organised by Malcolm and his wife Sally and everyone played three games, each time with a different partner. Each game ends when one of the teams scores 13 and we are delighted to say that Val Higgs was the overall, unbeatable winner, who scored the maximum 39 points with her various partners. Well done, Val. All the proceeds, including the winners' cash prizes, were very kindly given to the Fairford Pétanque fund, so we are now up and rolling with £56.00.

We welcome two new players, Pete and Jan Martin, and will continue playing until the end of October.

Waitrose Community Fund have accepted our application to be one of the charities in their October appeal. Can we plead with all members who shop in Waitrose (or even if they don't usually, could they make a special effort!!) to collect the green token and put it into the slot of our box, marked Fairford and District U3A. We shall be appealing to Cirencester U3A as well, and hopefully will be able to raise a couple of hundred pounds. Waitrose donates £1000 each month to three charitable causes and the amount given to each is dependent on the number of the green tokens donated in store.

Heather Baber

Striders

August. Five hardy souls decided to ignore the threatening weather forecast and were rewarded with a day which was overcast, but free of rain too! A steady pace meant completing the course in record time of just two hours, having walked from The Plough in Ford, through Cutsdean, up to a plantation and back down through Jackdaws Castle to the car park. On the way we had the bonus of several close-up sightings of horses being exercised from the stables of Jonjo O'Neill, where apparently there are 100 horses under training.

An excellent lunch at the pub, despite our being unable to shame Michael into sharing his pudding with the rest of us!

Recorders

At our last meeting we were conducted, coaxed and coerced by Ann Marshall and had a very enjoyable afternoon. We're very lucky to have the opportunity to be conducted by the composer/arranger of so many of the wonderful pieces of music available nowadays for recorder ensembles and Ann is very patient with us. This 'term' we thought that, if anyone would like to try conducting - maybe something they've brought along themselves or a piece we already have - for part of each session, they should have a go. It's not as easy as it looks!

Just in case we are invited to play something at the Christmas meeting this year, I suppose we should be thinking about the music already. We'll see how people feel about 'Frosty' but, in any case, we have some new seasonal pieces, something by Bach and Victoria; not forgetting our old bête-noir 'The Gloucestershire Wassail Song' - which I feel we're honour-bound to master sometime. However, I think we should start off with 'Summertime' and 'When the Saints' to try and keep the winter at bay for a little longer!

Hilary Bradshaw

Straddlers

July. Perhaps it was the weather forecast - but we had glorious sunshine. Perhaps it was the location - but Sherborne is just up the road from Fairford. Perhaps it was the length of the walk - but eight miles is the usual Straddler stroll and most of it was downhill. Whatever the reason, the six of us who had a delightful day's walking missed the rest of you!

We started at the Ewepen NT car park, then ambled into Sherborne village, on to the water meadows, coffee at the Mill, (nice new bridge) up past Manor Barn, touched on Great Rissington, lunch in the woods alongside the Leach, then around the edge of the estate, past some frisky cows, and back to the car park. An excellent day's walk through some lovely countryside, in sunny bright weather- you missed a treat!

PS. On Geoff's walk with a pub lunch there were nineteen walkers. Probably the venue was more attractive!!

Paul O' Shaughnessy

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

Please send items for the
October
 issue to Alison Hobson email:
 alisonmhobson@googlemail.com
 01285 711768
 no later than
Friday
23rd September