### Please send items for the **March issue to**

editor@fairfordu3a.org.uk by

### **Thursday 17th February**

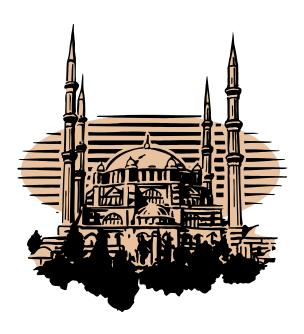
3	Adv. French, Yoga, Bridge, Short Tennis
4	Main Meeting, Keep Fit, Computers
5	Table Tennis, Scottish Reels
6	Model Making, Latin, Traditional Jazz
7	Poetry 1, Poetry 2, Recorders
10	French, Yoga, Bridge, Short Tennis
11	Keep Fit, Computers, Spanish, Book Circle 1 & 2
12	Table Tennis, Geology, Needlework, Walk with PL
13	Model Making, Rummikub
14	
17	Adv French, Yoga, Bridge, Short Tennis,
18	Keep Fit, Computers, Birdwatching, Postcards
	Five Rhythms, Table Tennis, Philosophy, Family
19	History 1, Family History 2, Scottish Reels
20	Model Making, Industrial Heritage
21	Music Listening, Recorders
24	French, Yoga, Bridge, Short Tennis
25	Keep Fit, Computers, Striders, Spanish
26	Table Tennis, Needlework
27	Model Making, Photography
28	Strollers
3	French, Yoga, Bridge, Short Tennis
4	Main Meeting, Keep Fit, Computers
5	Table Tennis, Scottish Reels
6	Model Making, Latin, Traditional Jazz
7	Poetry 1, Poetry 2
	5 6 7 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 3 4 5 6



### Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 203

February 2014



### **Syria, from Abraham to 2011**

www.fairfordu3a.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1072658

**Today, 4 February** 

We regret that, due to ill health, Richard Westcott will not be giving his talk and demonstration on:

The Confessions of a Pantomime Dame'.

We wish him a speedy recovery.

-000-

Instead, and at short notice, we welcome **Peter Stephenson** of Cirencester U3A. He will be aided by his wife, Miriam, and will be talking on the subject of:

### 'Syria, from Abraham to 2011'

'I'll give a general introduction to Syria, starting from Abraham, and going on through Greeks and Romans, the rise of Islam, Crusaders and the railway that Lawrence of Arabia tried to destroy. The story will end in March 2011, when I was on one of the last organised visits to Syria, just as the present troubles began. En route, I'll show you not to trust Shakespeare's Syrian geography.'

### **General Meetings**

### Palmer Hall, 2.30pm - Forthcoming events:

- **4 March** "A Rambling Fancy: A Journey Through Jane Austen's England". A second visit for our speaker, Caroline Sanderson, following a hugely successful talk last year.
- **1 April** AGM + "A Little Law" Stories from Graham Young, a retired solicitor. We hear some lively legal stories prompted by experiences in dealing with the law.
- **6 May** "In the Eye of the Beholder". Our speaker, Lesley Brain, is a regular columnist in our local newspaper, with her articles: 'Engaging the Brain'.

Editor this month: Sarah Bottomley

### **Chairman's Update**

My search for a new membership secretary continues. If you are interested please contact either myself or Ivor Price. This position needs to be filled at the latest by the AGM in April.

Reg Thoburn 01285 712397

### **Mary Rose**

### Tuesday 25 March

Please can I remind members who have booked this trip that the payment balance is due by the March general meeting (March 4).

There is a waiting list so if you decide you are unable to come please let me know as soon as possible so that I can reallocate the seats.



Reg Thoburn 01285 712397

### **Ted Trowbridge**

We are sorry to hear of the passing of Ted Trowbridge. He was a very keen walker and, with his wife, took part, both as a walker and on occasion as walk leader, in several of our walking groups. Our condolences go to Eileen and his family at this time.

### Kathleen Pugh

We are sorry to hear of the passing of Kathleen Pugh. Our condolences go Tegid, Helen, and her family at this time.

#### **Peter Wheeler**

We are sorry to hear of the passing of Peter Wheeler. Our condolences go to Jean and his family at this time.

### Fairford U3A January meeting

Members who normally read crime fiction will have been pleased to learn more about Judith Cranswick and the way she creates her books. As an adventurous traveller, tour guide and lecturer on cruise ships she has had plenty of opportunity to gather material. She described incidents that set her thinking of plots and events which have added body and given authenticity to her tales. She went into some detail about the importance of getting the facts right, because otherwise an author's credibility is lost.

Much of the talk concerned three titles, 'Blood on the Bulb Fields', 'Blood in the Wine' and 'A Death too Far', which meant even the non-crime readers could vicariously travel to Amsterdam and the Keukenhof Gardens, the Rhine and the Galapagos Islands. For two years running her first two books 'All in the Mind' and 'Watcher in the Shadows' won the National Association of Writers Award for unpublished works. One thing which became abundantly clear is that it is difficult to appreciate how much preparatory work is involved before starting to write a book.

Sylvia Jones

### **New members**

We welcome the following new members:

Barnaby & Margo Dunn Terry & Eileen Skellern Stuart & Ellen Thomson Wendy Robinson Michael & Catherine Garside Dennis Hoptroff

### **Photo Album**

If you should have any interesting photographs of U3A activities please pass them to Ann Wightman for the album 01285 712723

#### Tea Rota

4 March: Short Tennis

1 April : Solos 6 May : Spanish

### **GROUP EVENTS**

Please contact the group leaders if you are interested in joining any of the groups or visit www.fairfordu3a.org.uk for further information.

### Birdwatching Tuesday 18 February

This month we shall visit the Cotswold Water Park where we should be able to find a large selection of the water birds which winter here. Smew, goosander and red crested pochard are all strong possibilities. Meet at the Fairford car park at 9.00am. The paths can be muddy at this time of year so bring suitable footwear.



Richard Morgan 01285 712085

### Book Circle 1 Tuesday 11 February

At our February meeting we shall discuss '*The First Casualty*' by Ben Elton. Please let me know if you are unable to attend.

Denny Rawlinson 01285 711009



### **Book Circle 2** *Tuesday 11 February*

The group meets for discussion on the second Tuesday of every month at 2.30pm in members' homes. Books are chosen in December for the following year and every effort is made to ensure that they are also available as audiobooks. Anyone interested in joining us would be most welcome.

Sarah Basley 01285 712720 t.basley@btinternet.com



### Chess

Please contact Mike for details.

Mike Bennett 01367 252379 mish252379@btinternet.com

### **Bridge Improvers**

The group will continue to meet on Monday afternoons (except Bank Holidays) from 2.00pm to 4.00pm in the Heritage Room, Fairford Community Centre. Please contact me for further information.

If you play bridge and would like to improve come and join us; we are a friendly and informal group. Partners and refreshments provided.

Margaret Bishop 01285 713747 email mbishop@talktalk.net

### **Computer Group**

We meet every week on Tuesday mornings at my home where I aim to help members in the use of computers, the internet and more. If you are interested in joining, please contact me and you will be welcome.

For those just starting, I have a desktop computer that is available for members to use, although it is helpful if you have a laptop to bring along. If you want to start using email, I can allocate you a personal email address for your sole use.

Nick Humphris 01285 711740

### **Cycling and Pub Lunch**

This activity meets April to October

Paul O'Shaughnessy 01367 850262 paulatscissor@btinternet.com

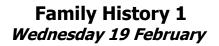


### **Dance to Five Rhythms**

### Wednesday 19 February

We dance regularly at the Palmer Hall on the third Wednesday of the month, at 10.00am. New members welcome.

Gillian Bilbrough 01285 712579 Joyce Deane 01285 851408



We shall meet at my house at 2.30. Ray Russell will talk to us about his family's involvement in both World Wars. Please let me know if you are unable to come.

Miriam Scott 01285 713441 Miriamscottfairford @gmail.com



### Family History 2 Wednesday 19 February

For details of this month's meeting please contact:

Michael Johnson 01285712637 sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk

### **French Conversation**

#### **Intermediate**

### Mondays 10, 24 February

We meet alternate Mondays

Rosemary Westlake 01285 712329 idrwestlake@gmail.com

#### **Advanced**

### **Every Monday**

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!

Barbara Cartwright 07989 353726

### **Garden Group**

For details of future meetings, please contact:

Penny Phillips 01285 711360 pennyrphillips@gmail.com

### Geology Wednesday 12 February

The Geology Group will meet at the chapel in Milton Street at 2.30pm. We should like input from members as to the forthcoming programme for the year.

Clive Watson 01285 713003 Brian Routledge 01285 712853

### **Industrial Heritage** *Thursday 20 February*

On Thursday 20th we will attend a presentation by the History Society (FHS) about local farms. This event will take place in the Community Centre at 10.00am. There will be a charge of £3 for non-FHS members.

On Thursday March 13th we are going to be given a talk about World War II airfields of the Cotswolds. This will take place in the Community Centre at 2.00pm. Potential new members to the group would be welcome to come along and see what we're about.

Pete Martin 01285 713908 petem91@btinternet.com

### **Keep Fit**

The Keep Fit class meets at the Palmer Hall each week on Tuesdays at 9.15am.

Eddie Rosser 01367 252504

## Latin Thursdays 6 February, 6 March

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 week on Thursday mornings. Please contact:

Jim Sullivan 01367 252539

### Music Listening Friday 21 February

This month's meeting will be held at 2.30pm in the Heritage Room, Fairford Community Centre on the above date and the theme will be 'A Favourite Piece of Music'.

John and Joyce Dear 01285 653338

### Needlework Wednesdays 12, 26 February

We meet at the Fairford Community Centre. This group brings together many different skills under the heading of 'Needlework'; we are a friendly group and enjoy our sessions.

Thelma Hardie 01285 713971

### Pétanque

See our Group Review for pre-season meetings.

Dave and Heather Baber 01285 711343



### Philosophy Tuesday 18 February

The next meeting will be Tuesday the 18th of February at my house. Considering that yesterday's luxuries are today's needs, the subject will be 'How Much is Enough'.

Dan Deane 01285 851408



## Photography Thursday 27 February

We shall meet at 2pm in the Community Centre. Anyone interested in joining please contact:

Gordon Hart 01285 238641 gordonghart@tiscali.co.uk

### **Poetry Circle 1**

### Fridays 7 February, 7 March

The group meets on the first Friday of the month at 2.30pm when we read and enjoy poetry and verse of all kinds. Anyone interested in joining us would be most welcome.

Barbara Cottam 01285 711054

### **Poetry Circle 2**

### Fridays 7 February, 7 March

We are looking forward to joining with our fellow Poetry Circle 1 members in February. We shall gather in the Heritage Room at Fairford Community Centre at 2.30pm to read poems we have chosen relating to '*Sharing*'.

Then on 7th March we shall meet at Jen's house(01285 712397) to look at some of the poetry of W B Yeats. Please let Jen or me know if you are unable to attend either of these meetings.

Barbara Cobbett 01285 712692

### **Postcards**

### Tuesday 18 February

Our meeting will be at 2.30pm at the usual venue. I have prepared a presentation about picture postcard publishers in the early 20th century, the Golden Age in particular.

Amazingly our theme letter this month has reached "W". This means that in June we shall have to think of some interesting subjects for the future.

John Higgs 01285 712488

### **Recorders**

### Fridays 7 and 21 February

February meetings will start with anyone who would like to play the treble (from 2.00-2.30) and followed by the main group at 2.30 to finish at 4.30, with a break for tea. We should be in the Farmor room on the ground floor of the Fairford Community Centre and will let you know if we have to use another room. As usual, we shall be playing a varied selection of music arranged for Descant, Treble, Tenor and Bass with the addition of Great and Contra basses in the occasional piece.

If there are any more recorder players who would like to join a friendly, non-judgemental group you would be very welcome - please contact: Hilary Bradshaw 01367 860030: <a href="mailto:hilary@burytown15.co.uk">hilary@burytown15.co.uk</a> or Jay Mathews 01367 860869: <a href="mailto:jaymathews124@mac.com">jaymathews124@mac.com</a> for further information. We have some spare instruments and stands; please ask if you would like to borrow one.

### Rummikub Thursday 13 February

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.

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

Mary Bennett 01367 253287

### **Spanish** *Tuesdays 11, 25 February*

We are a continuation group now, reading selected articles and commenting on what we have read.

Meetings are at my home from 11am to 12 noon.

Frank Hall 01285 712583 fkhall@talktalk.net

### **Scottish Reels**

13

### Wednesdays 5,19 February

Our group meets on alternate Wednesdays during the winter from 8 to 10pm at Poulton Village Hall. We are a friendly informal group who dance to enjoy ourselves. We welcome all standards including beginners. We charge £3 per person per evening to cover the hall hire and soft drinks at half-time. For further information please contact Richard or Carol Thompson 01285 712123

Richard@RichardAndCarol.net

### **Short Tennis**

This group meets in the Palmer Hall every *Monday*, starting at 3.00pm. Please note the earlier starting time.

Margaret Trickett 01285 712421



### **Solos**

For details of meetings in February please contact:

Michael Johnson 01285 712637 sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk

12

### **Straddlers**

There will be no Straddlers walk in February – Paul O'Shaughnessy will lead the first walk of the year on 20th March.



### **Striders**

### Tuesday 25 February

Well...after all the rain, it has taken a few hours of head scratching to find a walk that hasn't been under water! February's Striders walk will be from the spring-like village of Ashbury, about 3 miles south of Shrivenham. The 6 mile walk starts at the very popular Rose and Crown pub in Ashbury (http://www.roseandcrowninn.co.uk/) and follows the footpath to Idstone and on to Bishopstone. Many of the buildings in the area are made of hard local chalk - and are thatched - and very attractive. We walk through Bishopstone to a most picturesque quarter of the village called 'The City' before joining open country for the gentlest stroll through lovely valleys up to the Ridgeway. Honestly ladies, it's an easy climb! After about 2 miles we turn back downhill to Ashbury and lunch at the Rose & Crown. Please meet at the Fairford car park at 9.15 or at the pub just before 10am. Ashbury sounds a long way away but it's only 15 miles from Fairford and the suggested passenger rate is £2. Please let me know if you plan to walk OR if you plan to go direct to Ashbury. As normal, we will book lunch before we set out on the walk - see the website for details (the menu may vary on the day and there will be specials available).

John Burrows 01367 253056 john@burrows44.plus.com

### **Strollers**

### Friday 28 February

This month our 3-4 mile stroll will be around the countryside at Poulton, starting and finishing at the Falcon Arms in Poulton. Some mud is to be expected (especially after the very wet weather of January) but most of the walk is on firm tracks or metalled roads and given a fine sunny day should be easy walking. At one point we will need to cross the A417 so some care will be needed.

Meet at the Fairford car park at 9.45am or at the Falcon Inn at 10am where we can order our lunch before setting off. Suggested passenger fee is 50 pence.

Reg Thoburn 01285 712397

# Traditional Jazz *Thursdays 6 February, 6 March*Hymns and Spirituals

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

This month our programme will feature hymns and spirituals including George Lewis's 'Jazz at Vespers' concert from the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Oxford Ohio, 1954 and the 1999 series of concerts from the Danish churches at Sorgenfri, Femo and Holmstrup. These include such favourites as *The Old Rugged Cross, Lead Me Saviour, Just a Little While To Stay Here, Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling,* and *Just a Closer Walk with Thee.* 

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

### **Table Tennis**

The Group meets every Wednesday afternoon at 2.30pm in the Keble Room, first floor of Fairford Community Centre. New members of any ability always welcome – just come along.

Nick Stroude 01285 750646

### Yoga

The Yoga group meets weekly on Mondays at the Community Centre at 10am. There is a waiting list.

Sylvia Jones 01285 712657

### Walk with a Pub Lunch Wednesday 12th February

Our walk will commence from the Trout at St. John's Priory on the Faringdon Road just outside Lechlade where we shall cross to St John's lock and walk westward towards Halfpenny Bridge in Lechlade and continue on towards the Round House and then Inglesham. We shall then walk in a southerly direction for a short distance along the Lechlade to Highworth Road before we take the Buscot turning where we will take a track at Buscot Wick Farm to continue towards Buscot Weir. We will then meander along the Thames path back towards our starting point at the Trout. The walk is about 5 miles. Some mud is to be expected so stout shoes/boots and walking poles recommended. Meet at the Fairford car park at 9:30am or at the Trout for 9:45am. Suggested driver donation is £1.

16

Reg Thoburn 01285 712397

### **GROUP REVIEWS**

### **Book Circle 1**

Three Men in a Boat by Jerome K Jerome

Three good reasons to read this book in January:

- 1.Light relief after the stresses and strains of Christmas and New Year demands.
- 2. The descriptions of long sunny, summer days.
- 3.It is a short book.

Originally written as a serial in 1889, the story was meant as a historical and informative account of the Thames. The editor cut this material and encouraged the amusing passages. The three men and the dog were based on real characters who spent their spare time messing about on the river. The book was a great success in Britain and America and has never been out of print.

This proved a popular book with everyone in the group. Smiles, laughter and recognition of the humour in the stories were universal in the responses from everyone. Despite being all females and slightly older than the men in the book, we delighted in their escapades all those years ago. Jerome has captured a time that was so very different from today and yet he describes human characteristics that have not changed much in 100+ years.

Helen Evans

### **Family History 1**

### A Treasure Trove found in the Loft.

Alison told us what her family were doing during the two World Wars. Both her grandfathers were teachers, a reserved occupation, and did not fight in WW1. They were brothers (her parents were cousins) and went to Cambridge University. One taught at Alleyn's school in Dulwich and the other for Essex County Council. Alison's really exciting discovery was the collection of her great-aunt's diaries with daily entries from 1911 to 1946! Most of the entries were very humdrum about the running of a tobacconist's and newsagent's shop but every now and then the war made itself felt. For example: '3 August 1914: War rumoured. Very busy indeed all day selling papers.' '4 August: War declared.' '18 December: Egbert had come home ill. Dr signed papers. Deep mental depression. Pa said Egbert had been acting strange.' After only four months of war, shell-shock had begun to show itself.

The books in which Auntie May had written her diary were also fascinating. Every year 'The Ladies Year Book' provided a recipe at the bottom of each left hand page with gardening hints on the right.

Alison also told us of her family's involvement in WW2. We were amused to hear of her uncle, a founder of the British communist party and a conscientious objector, arguing his way out of enlistment. 'I shall disobey orders and I shall be shot'. We are grateful to Alison for a memorable talk and for her hospitality.

Miriam Scott

### Family History 2

Wednesday 15 January at 2.30pm

Our thanks are due to Mr Peter Martin who gave an excellent talk on the life history of his wife's grandmother - with humble beginnings in the Workhouse with all its privations and a criminal stepfather. It made for a fascinating tale of a life of Victorian "social service provision". Hospitality was provided by Mike Johnson whom we must also thank. Philip Meaden

### **Dance to Five Rhythms October Meeting**

In October we wanted to remember the founder of our dance movement, Gabrielle Roth. She was an American dance therapist who discovered that when five specific rhythms of music were played in a particular order they left the dancers feeling uplifted and refreshed in spirit. This month in the first half of our session we went back to the roots of her idea by using the music composed by Gabrielle and her talented group of musicians. In the second half, we danced to the music created by Susannah Darling Khan, who spread awareness of Five Rhythms dance through Britain.

We all agreed that we had enjoyed the change of programme. In previous sessions the music used had been mainly classical, pop or folk, played in the order devised by Gabrielle.

Next month we shall revert to our usual mixture of pieces. If anyone reading this is tempted to join us, the hall is spacious, the floor perfect for dancing and the sessions as vigorous or gentle as each dancer chooses to make them. Joyce Deane

### **Pétanque Group**

As summer was so good last year our members took full advantage of it and quite often we had to divide the piste into 5 lanes which were a bit narrow. To rectify this Dave, Reg and Heather had a meeting with the new Head of Farmor's School and asked if we could extend the area by about a metre. With his permission work has now started on this project and Dave and Nick braved the frost to start moving logs in order to make the new boundary. With the aid of the rest of the workforce and the donation of 5 tons of scalpings the new area will be all ready for the 2014 season.

The Heritage Room has been booked for Thursday 13th March at 10am when we will have our pre-season meeting. New members will be welcome, and Dave and Heather will also be available on 13th February for the Group leaders' meeting and will then be able to give any interested U3A new members more details of the Pétanque group. On 23rd January we held our New Year's lunch in The Bull and we look forward to another good season.

Dave and Heather Baber



### **Philosophy**

### **January**

The Subject for Discussion was "Age, Good or Bad"? Bula who led the discussion thought that a better title would be "Living on the Edge", as the older one gets the more precarious life becomes. A small perturbation can result in a rapid decline. Ageing, by shortening the remaining life span, could result in a better overview, together with a freeing of attitude giving less concern as to what people might think.

Manus pointed out that the effect of ageing is a process dependent on personal judgement. He quoted from a poem by Henry Vaughan. "Some men a forward motion love, But I by backward step would move; And when this dust falls to the urn, In that state I came, return." Susan followed this by quoting from Ecclesiastes, "Remember the days of thy youth." Manus then produced a graph showing awareness of an individual over their life span. How we start as a child only with immediate concerns, progress to wider appreciation of the world on maturity and then decline in old age to the child-like state.

We had, I think, at this stage of the discussion, reached a consensus that in old age an outward-looking individual was more satisfied with life and therefore would probably be more acceptable to the younger generation.

Dan Deane

### **Poetry Circle 1**

Our theme for January was Words and Music. Most of us chose poems which had been set to music and we remarked how the music enhanced the verse. Unsurprisingly many of us chose love songs- 'My love is like a red, red rose,' by Robert Burns, 'Bredon Hill' by A.E.Housman, 'Danny Boy' by F.Weatherley, 'Kathleen Mavourneen' by Julia Crawford and 'The Rose' by Amanda Macbroom. 'It came upon the midnight clear' by Edmund Sears added a seasonal touch whilst 'Macavity the mystery cat' by T.S.Eliot and 'Mad dogs and Englishmen' by Noel Coward made an amusing change.

The poems, often nostalgic, sometimes poignant were encapsulated by one poem, 'I sit beside the fire and think' by J.R.R. Tolkien.

"But all the while I sit and think Of times there were before. I listen for returning feet And voices at the door."

Barbara Cottam



Answers: 1. The Bells Of London 2. Babes In The Wood
3. Dandini
5. She Fell Asleep
6. A Pumpkin
7. Hansel And Gretel 8. Dick Whittington

### **Friday 29 November**

A pleasant late Autumn walk for 13 of us who gathered at the Riverside in Lechlade and set off at 10.15 on a 2.25 mile walk 'around' Lechlade. Sky was clear, but the wind was cold in unsheltered areas. It was good to have Rosemary Westlake with us, and how good she was negotiating stiles with guiding hands of Jeanne Watkins and others.

We enjoyed a combination of river banks, country lanes, field paths and town footpaths which took us in a circular route around Lechlade, finishing with the Seven Stiles loop....which now has no stiles! An excellent lunch by a roaring fire at the Riverside was a very convivial way of rounding off the 2013 Strollers programme and we now look forward to walking both with established leaders and some new volunteers in 2014.

Michael Yorke

### **Short Pantomime Quiz:**

- 1. What told Dick Whittington to 'turn again'?
- 2.In which pantomime does Maid Marian appear?
- 3.In Cinderella, what is the name of Prince Charming's friend?
- 4. What is the name of Aladdin's mother?
- 5. When Sleeping Beauty pricked her finger on a spindle, what happened to her?
- 6. What does Cinderella's Fairy Godmother turn into a coach?
- 7. Who ate the Gingerbread House?
- 8. Which pantomime character marries Alice Fitzwarren?