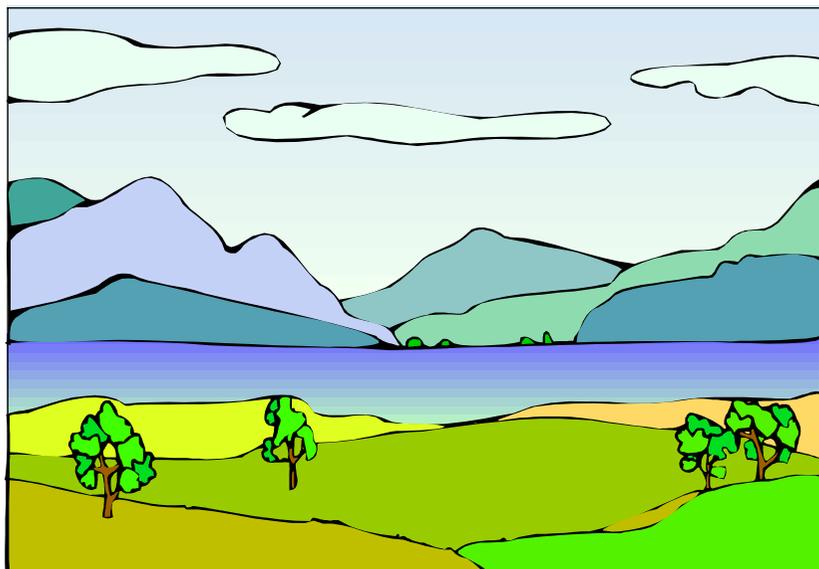




Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 192

February 2013



**Munro bashing
by Stuart and Ellen Thompson**

General Meetings

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm

5 March Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens by Anna Fletcher

2 April AGM and the River Lea by John Higgs

7 May 'Shazam' - a look at the old picture palaces by Rob Herring

New members

We welcome the following new members:

Nicola Beach

Beryl Jones

Patricia and Raymond Russell

Mary Sawyer

John and Elizabeth Spatcher

Tea Rota

March 5 : Music Listening

April 2 : Needlework

May 7 : Pétanque

Today, 5 February

Munro Bashing involves climbing mountains over 3000 feet in height. Our speakers, who lives in Fairford, will be telling us about some of their experiences mountaineering in Scotland.

In March our speaker is the advertising co-ordinator for the Cotswold Wildlife Park and will be giving us some history of the Park, and describing how they manage its joint provision for the gardens, animals, children's activities and the train.

After the AGM in April John Higgs will take us on a trip, illustrated by postcards, along the River Lea which rises in Bedfordshire and flows into the River Thames. It was this area that was rejuvenated by the 2012 Olympics.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

Thank you to everyone who has let me have their renewal form. If you haven't would you please get it to me as soon as possible to allow me to get my Membership list updated before the end of February. I should appreciate a message if you do not intend to renew so that I do not have to contact you.

Ivor Price

01285 712417

Membership Secretary

www.fairfordu3a.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1072658

Chairman's update

At the January committee meeting, we discussed an important subject that I would like to bring to your attention; it was the evacuation procedure at the Palmer Hall in the event of an emergency. Do you always book in on arrival at the hall? Do you know where all the emergency exits are? Do you know where you should muster on leaving the Palmer Hall? Although it is very unlikely that we shall ever have an emergency we need to be fully prepared in case it should happen. When we have finalised our plans we shall be issuing all members with an evacuation instruction sheet. In the meantime we shall be relocating the booking-in desk to the left of the main doors to keep the exit clear and I will point out all the emergency exits at the February meeting. Please do not be alarmed: we are doing this to ensure your safety. Have we any members instructed in first aid or emergency procedure who could help if we needed to evacuate the building? I shall be asking for a list of volunteers who would be prepared to assist in the case of an emergency.

Reg Thoburn
01285 712397

Photograph Album

Thanks to those members who have already let me have photos of their group activities. In February, I would be delighted to have pictures from:

Bridge
French Conversation - both groups
Needlework
Rummikub
Yoga

Rosemary Westlake idrwestlak@gmail.com

February 29 is the day, in Irish, British and some Scandinavian cultures, when women can propose to men. Ladies' Privilege some call it. Some cite a legal backing for this in the form of a law passed in 1288 by Queen Margaret of Scotland, the Maid of Norway. Unfortunately Margaret was not in Scotland in 1288 – she died in 1290, age 7.

For more information about this and any of the other 'interesting' dates in this month's issue see <http://www.information-britain.co.uk/famousdates.php>

U3A January

'Kiss Chase and Conkers: the games we played', written by Caroline Sanderson, would aptly summarise the talk at Fairford U3A in January but it would entirely miss the essence of the occasion. In a vibrant voice Caroline asked everyone present to think back to their nine-year-old selves and the games they played. Immediately members were engaged as they called out, marbles, skipping, hoops, hopscotch, leap frog, conkers and tag of many versions. Thus the enthusiasm flourished as Caroline moved from outdoor to indoor pursuits like ludo, cat's cradle and stone, paper, scissors. She spoke about the variations of some of these games depending on geographical location but her overriding theme was the fact that so many of them had a history; sometimes even a very long one. She left the audience feeling that they had contributed, been subtly educated and entertained.

Sylvia Jones

Third Age Trust News

Tutored Online Courses coming early 2013

Four fantastic online courses, of which three are brand new !
Each course costs just £5

Short Story Writing

from 20 January
If you need motivating to start writing or would like feedback on your work this could be the course for you.

Three Viking Women

from 4 February
Unn the Deep-Minded, Thorgerd Brak and Gudrun Osvifsdottir – three women who in Viking times had more freedom and power than any others in Europe.

Just before Victoria

from 4 February
The seven years preceding Queen Victoria's reign—from Parliament to the Poor Law.

The First World War: the Home Front from 4 February
This course concentrates not on dates and battles, but on aspects such as shell-shock, which had an impact on the lives of both soldiers and civilians.

onlinecourses.u3a.org.uk

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 19 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 9am. The paths can be muddy at this time of year so bring suitable footwear.

Richard Morgan
01285 712085

Book Circle 1

Tuesday 12 February

Our next meeting will be held at Pauline's home when we shall discuss 'The Daughter of Time' by Josephine Tey.

Please let me know if you are unable to come.

Denny Rawlinson
01285 711009

Book Circle 2

Tuesday 12 February

We shall meet at my house at 2.30pm having read 'The White Spider' by Heinrich Harrer. Please let me know if you are unable to attend.

Sarah Basley
01285 712720
t.basley@btinternet.com

Bridge Improvers

The group meets every Monday afternoon from 2-4 pm in the Heritage Room, Fairford Community Centre. We are a friendly and informal group, making mistakes and learning together. If you play bridge and would like to improve, come and join us!

All players welcome, partners and refreshments provided.

Margaret Bishop
01285 713747
mbishop@talktalk.net

Chess

Wednesday 20 February

The February meeting will be at 2pm, at Mike's House. Please note the earlier start time.

Mike Bennett
01367 252379
mish252379@btinternet.com

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

German Circle

Please contact me for further details.

Karin Forman
01367 252675

Family History 1

Wednesday 20 February

We shall meet at my house and we will look at: probate, wills and administrations, jurisdictions (where to find a will), what it might contain and how to read it.

Please let me know if you are unable to come.

Miriam Scott
01285 713441

Family History 2

Wednesday 20 February

This meeting will be held at my house at 2.30pm and Clive Watson will talk to us on his research into his family history.

Michael Johnson
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk
01285 712637

Garden Group

Thursday 21 February

We shall meet in the Heritage Room at Fairford Community Centre at 2pm and watch a DVD on clematis.

Peggy Holbrook
01285 712747

February 10th 1355 : St Scholastica's Beer Riots, Oxford
A pub brawl between town and gown that got sadly out of hand with far reaching consequences; 63 students and 30 citizens were killed.

Five Rhythms Dance

Five Rhythms is a dance system which Gabrielle Roth developed in America. We follow the pattern she suggested so that gentle opening music allows time for a warm-up before moving into a Flowing style and then the pace quickens with two brackets, Staccato and Chaos before slowing down to Lyrical and Stillness.

Everyone moves according to their ability and how they feel about the music. There are no steps to learn and no worry about 'Will I have a partner?'

In January the music included classical and contemporary, didgeridoos and trumpets, and Beethoven and Chris Barber so that there is something for everyone. You are welcome to give it a try on the third Wednesday of each month at 10am in the Palmer Hall.

Gillian Bilbrough
01285 712579
Joyce Deane
01285 851408

February 2nd 1709

Alexander Selkirk (Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe) was rescued after five years from the island of Aguas Buenas, 470 miles off Chile.

French Conversation

Intermediate

Salut tout le monde! Les dates pour février sont le 11 et le 25. Je vous attendrai a 11h comme d'habitude.

Rosemary Westlake
01285 712329
idrwestlake@gmail.com

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!

Barbara Cartwright
07989 353726

Keep Fit

The Keep Fit class usually meets at the Palmer Hall weekly on Tuesdays at 9.15am.

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

Geology

Wednesday 13 February

The February meeting involves a visit to the Natural History Museum in South Kensington London. We travel by car to Thornhill Park and Ride in Oxford and then take the Oxford tube to Notting Hill and then a short walk across Hyde Park to the Museum. If you need a lift please contact Brian Routledge or Clive Watson.

It is important to leave the car park in Fairford at 7am sharp as Thornhill Park and Ride though free rapidly fills up. The Museum is also free but the Park and Ride costs around £8. Recommended passenger fee in the car is £3.

We normally leave the Museum at 3pm to catch the Oxford tube from Notting Hill back to Thornhill Car Park. Brian and I hope as many as possible can come and non Geology people are most welcome.

Clive Watson
01285 713003
Brian Routledge
01285 712853

February 4th 211

Septimius Severus is one of the more interesting and successful Roman Emperors. He came to Britain in 208AD with his two sons. He died in the city of York aged 64, probably of pneumonia.

Industrial Heritage

A group visit has been arranged to the Vintage Flyers at Cotswold Airport (formerly RAF Kemble) to take place on Thursday Feb 14th at 10am.

We will be the guests of Vintage Flyers whose hangar usually houses about 20 aircraft of various vintages undergoing extensive restorations or routine maintenance. The group will be limited to 12 persons and a small donation would be appreciated.

In March, we shall meet on the 21st at **2pm** in the Community Centre, to plan our future activities, visits, as well as talks and meetings. If you have an interest you will be very welcome to join us.

Pete Martin
01285 713908

Model Group

The Model Group meets weekly on Thursday mornings.

Please contact:

Jim Sullivan
01367 252539

Music Listening

Friday 15 February

I am now pleased to confirm that John and Joyce Dear have taken over the leadership of this Group, for which we are extremely grateful; from the March Newsletter onwards, they will provide the Group's contribution to the Newsletter.

Meetings, until further notice, will be in the Tame Room at Fairford Community Centre at 2.30pm on the 3rd Friday in the month.

The theme for this meeting will be American Music, carried over from the January meeting which was cancelled due the weather.

PLEASE NOTE the seemingly earlier than usual date, as the 1st February falls on a Friday; This also applies to the March meeting, which will be on Friday 15th March.

Michael Yorke
Group Co-ordinator
01367 253286

Needlework

This month the Needlework group will meet at Fairford Community Centre on 13th and 27th February.

For further details please contact:

Thelma Hardie
01285 713971

Pétanque

On Thursday 24th January, we had our New Year's lunch at The Bull, in Fairford. Despite the snowy weather nearly all of our members were able to come and as usual it was an enjoyable social gathering with a very good two-course lunch.

We shall be arranging our pre-season meeting in mid March, with venue and date yet to be arranged.

David and Heather Baber
01285 711343

Philosophy

Wednesday 20 February

Our next meeting will be at Manus's house. The subject will be 'Language'.

Manus Moran
01285 810511

Poetry Circle 1

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

Barbara Cottam
01285 711054

February 1st 1884

*The Oxford English dictionary
first published.*

Poetry Circle 2

Friday 1 February

We meet at Gillian's house to read poems on the theme of 'February'.

Then on 1 March we shall meet at my house and the subject will be 'Victorian Women Poets'.

Barbara Cobbett
01285 712692

Postcard Group

Tuesday 19 February

As usual the meeting will be at my house at 2.30pm. We shall be looking at postcards about the theatre.

This month's theme letter will be 'O'.

John Higgs
01285 712488

Short Tennis

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

As membership has increased recently, we are unable to accept new members at the moment.

Margaret Trickett
01285 712421

Recorders

February dates for the recorder group will be Fridays the 8th and 22nd, starting with anyone who would like to play the treble (please come and have a go) from 2-2.30pm 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. The session on the 22nd February will be led by Dennis Toomer who is kindly stepping in for Jay and Hilary as they will be off on their annual trip to Antigua to visit Hilary's eldest son (and to lounge around a bit in the sun doing absolutely nothing! Just **seeing** the sun feels unbelievable at the moment).

If there are any more recorder players who would like to join a friendly, non-judgemental group please contact: Hilary Bradshaw 0 1 7 9 3 7 2 0 0 3 7 : hilary@burytown15.co.uk or Jay Mathews 01367 253510: jaymathews124@mac.com for further information. We have some spare instruments and stands, please ask if you would like to borrow one.

February 20th 1472

*The liberation of the Orkneys and
Shetlands from Norway.*

Rummikub

Thursday 14 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

Scottish Reels

Our last two meetings for this winter are 27 February and 20 March. We meet on the above Wednesday evenings from 8pm to 10pm at Poulton Village Hall.

Our group will re-commence on Wednesday 18 September and fortnightly thereafter.

If you would like to receive our emails (no more than one a month) please email richard@richardandcarol.net

Richard Thompson
01285 712123

February 18th 1678

Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan published.

Solos

Monday 4 February

Our next meeting will be at Val's house at 12.30pm. We shall be celebrating our 1st birthday with a lunch party.

Michael Johnson
01285 712637

Spanish

This Spanish group is for beginners, but those with some Spanish are welcome! Meetings are on the second and fourth Tuesday mornings, 11-12 noon, at my home.

Frank Hall
01285 712583

Yoga

The Yoga group meets weekly on Mondays at the Community Centre at 10am.

If you have asked to be on the waiting list, please check with Sylvia that your name is recorded.

Sylvia Jones
01285 712657

Straddlers

Thursday 21 February

The walk begins at the Roman Villa near Chedworth. Access is best from the Fosse Way at the turn off to Yanworth just before Fossebridge.

The route begins at the Villa and proceeds south along Macmillan Way but joins the Monarchs Way just short of Chedworth. Continue above Chedworth along the Monarchs Way for about a kilometre. Then sharp left NNE on a footpath crossing a minor road and through Chedworth Woods down to the bridge over the Coln (coffee/tea break) then sharp right along the Monarchs Way to Oxpens Farm. Return along Macmillans Way via Yanworth (lunch) and down to the bridge. Finally along the track by the river Coln back to the Roman villa. The walk is undulating but no steep hills. Most of the walk is firm but some stretches are likely to be muddy. The last section from the bridge is flat. It's a fraction under 7 miles.

We meet at Fairford car park at 9.15am, and at the Roman Villa by 10am. Recommended passenger fee is £1.

Clive Watson
01285 713003

Striders

Tuesday 26 February

The walk of about 6 miles will be based to the West of the Five Mile House Pub, off the A417 dual carriage way, 5 miles north of Cirencester (979091). Take the Duntisbourne Abbots exit and follow the signs to 'Services - Not 24 Hours'; this will take you under the road. Turn right at T junction, pub is on the left.

The walk will take us along country roads, through Miserden Park and across muddy fields. We will pass first through Winstone, enter the Park and follow wide tracks towards Bull Banks, before heading across fields towards Duntisbourne Abbots, and then back to the pub. Much depends on the weather and ground conditions. There are a number of possible short cut options.

Meet at Fairford car park for a 9.15am start or at the Pub 9.45. Passenger charges should be £2.50 from Fairford £3 from elsewhere.

Ian & Rosemary Westlake
01285 712329

February 14th 1779

*Captain Cook killed on Hawaii,
buried at sea on February 21st.*

Strollers

Friday 22 February

This month we shall be walking around the byways and footpaths of Lechlade, starting and finishing at The Trout Inn, and sampling their weekday lunch special at £8.50.

The exact route will be decided nearer the time, when I get a handle on what the weather will be like....at the time of writing, to meet the copy date for the Newsletter, it is certainly not the time for planning a country walk!

All will be ok on the day, be assured; around 3 miles and one and a half hours walking. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.45am or at The Trout at 10.15am to pre order lunch and be away by 10.30/10.45.

Safety first....boots and sticks a must please; will look forward to your company, an enjoyable walk and hopefully a good lunch.

Michael Yorke
01367 253286

Table Tennis

We meet every Wednesday at 2.30 pm in the first floor Keble Room at the Community Centre. Players of all abilities are most welcome.

Nick Stroude
01285 750646

Traditional Jazz

Thursday 7 February

The group meets on the first Thursday of each month at our house in Lechlade from 2- 4.30pm. This month we shall review the 1950s British 'Trad' Revival and compare it with UK traditional jazz as played to-day. (The Savannah Band at Wantage on 20th February will be an excellent example of this.)

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

Walking and Pub Lunch

Wednesday 13 February

February is snowdrop time so our walk this month will be around the National Trust owned Sherbourne Park Estate near Northleach, where in the past the snowdrops have been spectacular, followed by lunch at the Sherborne Arms, Aldsworth.

We shall meet as usual at the Fairford car park at 9.45am or at the Ewe Pen Barn car park at Sherborne Park Estate at 10.15am. Although this is a marked flattish, easy 3+ mile walk on footpaths and metalled lanes, stout footwear is recommended along with suitable clothing for the time of year. Recommended passenger fee is £1.

13 Reg Thoburn 01285 712397

GROUP REVIEWS

Birdwatching

We were so lucky to have a clear bright day with no wind for our trip to Slimbridge. However, it was cold with much of the water frozen and this just served to rearrange the birds. We saw all the regular wintering geese, though some of these were rather distant; but many of the ducks were much closer. The bittern didn't show itself for us, which shows how lucky we were last year. There were plenty of other birds to look at. The swirling flocks of silvery dunlin gave great displays each time they took to the air. All these birds attracted the usual predators and we saw two peregrines, a sparrow hawk, a couple of buzzards and a fox, but none were hunting whilst we were watching.

Our highlight was probably a group of five well-camouflaged snipe hiding in a clump of grass close to our hide with only their heads showing, giving a great photo opportunity. With glorious sunshine and lots of birds it was an excellent start to the year.

Richard Morgan

Book Circle 1

The book choice this month was 'The Informers' by Juan Gabriel Vasquez, a Colombian writer. In the group we do attempt each year to have a good variety of books including a translation - this is the first time we have ventured to South America.

In the book the author returns to the history of Colombia - in particular the 1939-45 war when Colombia supported the U.S.A. and the allies. Previous to 1939 many German and Austrian Jews fled to South America to escape treatment from the Nazis. In addition to Jewish people there were Germans who were Nazi sympathisers. These people eventually had their businesses confiscated and were interned as possible spies.

The story hinges on the treachery and betrayal between these two groups. None of us found this an easy read, but it illustrates how far Nazi thoughts and ideas reached out around the world.

Pauline Dring

Book Circle 2

We met on 15th January to discuss a book of our choice by Ernest Hemingway. The eight of us there had chosen six different books. 'Fiesta: The Sun also Rises' was written in his 20s and the four of us who had read it generally disliked it, although did enjoy the bullfighting days later in the book. 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro' and 'The Old Man and the Sea' both impressed our member for their strong attachment to the main characters, and the sparse language, which perhaps demanded more effort from the reader – an aspect which seemed to be common in his later works. We felt that perhaps this style had been born out of his war correspondent years. 'A Moveable Feast' was entertaining, describing all the prominent literary/artistic figures of that era that had congregated in Paris to avoid prohibition in the USA. 'To Have and Have Not' was enjoyed for the drama of a fisherman cum gunrunner, reflecting, perhaps, hints of Graham Greene and James Joyce? It was felt, however, that it was disjointed by being several short stories stitched together; though once again the tight language was very effective. 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' was considered, unsurprisingly, to be a masterpiece, and at last the genius not visible (to us!) in 'Fiesta' showed through.

Finally, apropos of nothing, we learned from Ian how as we get older we can tell our age - according to a toddler! Ask Ian!

Kevin Hannigan

Family History 1

The group planned future sessions and decided to have fewer meetings during the year. They also looked at newspaper archives using <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/libraries/vrl> (virtual reference library) and putting in one's library ticket number.

Alison Hobson

February 1106 : The Great Comet

The Peterborough Chronicle....relates that an unusual star was observed on February 16 1106, appearing in the South West, the star itself not very significant, but its tail directed North East very bright, 'Like an immense beam.' Halley suggested in 1680 that the great comet of that year was the return of the one seen in 1106.

Family History 2

This was a very informal meeting discussing things we might do in the future. There was interest in visiting the National Archives in the future, and possibly a visit to the Probate Office in London.

We went back to basics for our newer members, with great advice from our more experienced members. We discussed the information you can get from British newspaper archives indeed, Val read out an article she had found which gave a lot of information on a relative she had no idea had a previously unknown relationship.

Michael Johnson

Philosophy

January - 'Error has no rights'

You might think this subject would stir up the bloody wars of religion in Fairford. In fact, we tried hard NOT to give it a religious connotation, discussing the definitions of error. This turned out to be a mistake, a non-deliberate wrong turning, an arrow just failing its target, rather than an evil deserving of anathema.

We side-tracked slightly (erring...!) into questions of conscience. (Few people realise that Catholics are BOUND to follow the dictates of their conscience, even in disagreement with the powers of the Hierarchy). The presence of our official atheist was sorely missed.

Finally, reluctantly, we were obliged to confront the fact that this was a question of religion, being a slightly mangled quote from Pope Leo XIII (d.1903), who said that Truth had rights, but error had none. Unfortunately, no one had read Dignitatis Humanae, so no one knew what he had actually been talking about. (He also wrote the first great social encyclical De Rerum Novarum, dealing with the fall-out from the Industrial Revolution).

Happily, the gallows and the stake are no longer the outcome of argument and difference. We are a friendly lot and in spite of an awareness of deep - if hidden - waters, we drank our tea and went home in the impartial frosty evening.

Bula Brazil

Poetry Circle 1

Our subject for the first meeting of 2013 was 'Time of Day'. London in the early morning was described in 'Lady Street' by John Drinkwater. Mary Robinson, a poet new to most of us, also wrote about the busy streets of London at daybreak. She was writing at the end of the eighteenth century; one does not hear of many women poets of that time. Whilst most of the readings were descriptive, Ian's choice of 'Pub Bomb' by Wislawa Szymborska, translated from the Polish and read most chillingly, brought us back to the present day with its gruesome countdown and the random fate of terrorist victims. We can only hope that the coming year will be a more peaceful year for the poetic muse.

Barbara Cottam

Industrial Heritage

John Higgs gave an illustrated talk that showed the development of Traction Engines at our January meeting. He further enhanced this informal lecture by displaying a detailed engineering model he had constructed. This ably demonstrated the internal operation of these machines.

Pete Martin

Table Tennis

We are grateful to Ron and Maureen Needham and their son for kindly donating an excellent table to the group, along with net, bats and balls. Michael Yorke, Mike Johnson and Reg Thoburn executed the delivery of it to the Community Centre with the use of Mike's trailer. Michael then was good enough to give it a spring clean. Our thanks go to them all. It is stored in the Keble Room ready for our use.

This means we have two tables available. At our first session of this year on 9 January, 8 players turned up and we needed to use both tables. On 16 January we had 4 players, so only one table was in use. At both sessions we played doubles, but with the 2 tables singles are now a practical option – so if you fancy coming along for some gentle exercise please join us. Hire of the Keble Room costs £6 for the hour at our concession rate, we cover this cost by those who turn up.

Nick Stroude

Solos

At the beginning of December four members of the group travelled to Bournemouth for a Turkey and Tinsel weekend. We drove down via some interesting country roads, to avoid major roadworks, stopping for lunch at a pub along the way.

The Whitehall Hotel was centrally located and the public rooms were tastefully decorated with tinsel and baubles. The rooms were comfortable and clean and the staff most pleasant and helpful. We settled in and opted not to join the entertainment after dinner.

Next day one of the group visited their family in the area and since the sun was shining the rest of us walked along the promenade on the seafront, returning to the pier for lunch. Then we paid a visit to the interesting Oceanarium.

Father Christmas arrived with gifts before dinner and a festive meal with all the trimmings was enjoyed. The DJ was highly entertaining and to break the ice (since no-one was dancing) our intrepid leader pranced onto the dance floor with his harem and set the ball rolling.

Sunday was sunny again so we walked to Boscombe Pier and back and in the afternoon investigated the shopping area.

The jovial evening dinner was on New Year's Eve with tigertail balloons and whistles. We were entertained this time by a singing duo and (a good bit before midnight) were served with champagne; we let off poppers and sang in the New Year!

Next morning we returned home, stopping at Tidworth British Legion for a break only to find that no hot drinks are served there due to 'health and safety'!

The Solos are already thinking of returning to Bournemouth next year for Turkey and Tinsel.

Gwen Webster

On **10th December**, our last meeting of the year, eleven of us met at Val's house for lunch. Val had decorated the table beautifully and prepared the main course; we had a choice of fish pie or stew. We all contributed sweets, wine, sherry, and crackers and a great time was had by all. After the meal Annie entertained us by singing and playing the guitar. Pictures and videos of our activities throughout the year were shown, plus seasonal music. We also welcomed two new members.

I should like to thank Val for all her hard work, and all our members for the contributions they have made to a successful afternoon and to the

Solos group generally. Although slightly belated, I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year

On **Wednesday 23rd January** six of us braved the weather for lunch at my house. Visitors were welcomed to a friendly open fire, Val made and supplied the excellent soup and a bottle of wine, Michael contributed the homemade bread. The lunch was leisurely, and a DVD of the Solos activities during our first year was supposed to be shown, unfortunately Michael could not get it to play on the TV, (within 10 minutes of everybody going home he got it to work). A quiz had been arranged but time ran out, but it was good to get out and socialise after being snowbound during the last few days.

Michael Johnson

Walking and Pub Lunch

Despite the rain the previous evening and the warnings of deep mud and puddles, twelve hardy members met at Little Coxwell to enjoy the five-mile circular walk via Fernham. Having selected our lunch choices we set off in glorious sunshine on what was the best day of the year so far. The countryside around the Coxwells and Fernham is outstanding, and although we were unable to see the White Horse because of the mist we were able to enjoy distant views of the Marlborough Hills. We did take a small detour because of the mud but this did not detract from our enjoyment of the walk.

Lunch was excellent and, prompted by the speaker the previous day at the U3A meeting, conversation soon turned to memories of games, rhymes and pranks we had played in our childhood. Happy memories, what little perishers we were!

Reg Thoburn

February - a bad month for Royalty!

February 18th 1478 Duke of Clarence drowned in a butt of Malmsey

February 13th 1542 Catherine Howard executed

February 12th 1554 Lady Jane Grey executed

February 8th 1587 Mary, Queen of Scots executed

January 30th 1649, Charles 1 beheaded, buried February 9th 1649

Timetable of Group Activities

Needlework and Recorders meet twice monthly. Pétanque and Cycling April-October only. Scottish Reels on alternate Wednesday evenings, September to March. Industrial Heritage monthly.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday am	French, Yoga,	French Yoga	French Yoga	French Yoga
	Bridge, Solos Short tennis	Bridge Short Tennis	Bridge Short Tennis	Bridge Short Tennis
Tuesday am	Keep Fit Computers	Keep Fit Spanish Computers	Keep Fit Birdwatching Computers	Keep Fit Spanish Striders Computers
	Main meeting	Book Circle 1 Book Circle 2 German Beg	Further German Postcards	
Wednesday am	Pétanque	Walking & PL Pétanque	Five Rhythms Pétanque	Cycling & PL Pétanque
	Table Tennis	Geology Table Tennis	Family Hist 1 & 2 Philosophy Table Tennis	Chess Table Tennis
Thursday am	Model Boats	Model making	Model Boats Straddlers	Model Boats
	Latin Traditional Jazz	Rummikub	Garden	
Friday am				Strollers
	Poetry Circle 1 Poetry Circle 2	Recorders	Music	Recorders

Please send items for the
March
issue to Alison Hobson
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editor@fairfordu3a.org.uk by
Friday February 22nd