



## Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 186

July/August 2012



### Travels in the South American Rain Forest by Simon Trapnell

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

Registered Charity No 1072658

### General Meetings

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm

**7 August** Treasure Hunt in Fairford followed by tea at the Community Centre

**4 September** An unusual job for a woman  
by Marion Canning

**2 October** The Elgin Marbles  
by Malcolm Delingpole

### Tea Rota

September 4 : Geology

October 2 : German

November 6 : Keep Fit

### Today, 3 July

Today's speaker has travelled widely following his interest in The Nature of Art Trust. We look at the common ground between art and science and between conservation and the artist.

In September we shall be entertained by an amusing description of the life of a female Toastmaster.

### New members

We welcome the following new members:

Ray and Hazel Selby

### August 7th meeting

For the August meeting, Pam Davey has kindly arranged a Treasure Hunt around Fairford.

We shall start at the Community Centre, where we shall receive a map of Fairford with places marked on it, plus a list of clues. We can do this in pairs or small groups.

At each of the places marked on the map we shall find a 'Picture' of a person, place or object, with a letter on it. We consult our list of 'clues' and write the letter against the appropriate 'clue'.

A few 'Pictures' will be displayed in the Centre at the start and most of the others will be in shops nearby. Some will be a bit harder to find! There will be a time limit.

We return to the Community Centre to give in our answer sheets and to enjoy tea - followed by prize-giving!

Donations of cakes on the day will be welcome!

Jean Crowley  
01285 711775

## New Groups??

A few members have approached me expressing their interest in the formation of an Art Group. So, from this two immediate questions emerge:

- Are there any other members who share this interest and would like to join?
- Is there a member who can paint, in whichever medium, watercolours, acrylics or oils, who would be prepared to lead this Group?

Other possible Groups that have been discussed are:

- Mah Jong
- Wine Appreciation
- Industrial Archaeology

....all potentially very enjoyable Groups for members, so do please think about them and let me know if you would enjoy any of them. The mechanics of getting a Group started can be quite easily dealt with once we have the interest.

In the past few months, we have successfully launched Postcards, Solos and Computer Groups, so let's hope we can get one or more of these new suggestions off the ground.

Michael Yorke  
Group Co-ordinator  
01367 253286

## Lechlade Library

A group, headed by Sue Coakley, is planning to take over from GCC on 1 November 2012. They are seeking Charity Commission approval for the new enterprise. Volunteers are needed to man the desk, and also for services they wish to develop for children...and older people! It is anticipated that desk duty will be on a rota of three hours per fortnight; full training will be given, with a period of joint running just prior to 1 November. Money is, of course, an issue and so they are also seeking Friends to offer an annual standing order of £10 (more if you can!) to help make it a success. If you would like more information, please contact Sue at:

scoakley@lechladeonthames.co.uk

## U3A June

When the speaker scheduled to talk to the Fairford U3A on 6th June could not attend, Chris Hobson, a local historian, quickly filled in with a very timely topic, 'The Role of RAF Fairford on D-Day'. The airfield had been completed just in time for two squadrons, Nos. 620 and 190, to train, mainly with Short Stirlings and Horsa gliders, ready for the memorable invasion of Normandy. The Stirlings were suitable for both transporting paratroops and towing gliders. During the night of 5th June, 1944, 887 paratroops were flown on 45 aircraft to their target area to secure bridges over the river Orne and on 6th June 36 gliders carried troops and equipment to Ranville as support. Only three planes from squadron 620 were lost.

Chris was able to put a human face on this momentous effort by showing maps, diagrams and photographs.

Sylvia Jones

## Dates for your Diary

### 4 September:

Dr Nick Barrett from 'Who do you think you are?' will be talking to Fairford WI at 7.30pm in the Palmer Hall. Visitors welcome. Tickets £3 to non WI members.

### 20-23 August:

U3A Summer School and U3A AGM 2012, both at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. For details see

<http://www.nlu3a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Booking-notes-both-Summer-Schools-PDF.pdf>

<http://mku3a.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/AGM-flyer.pdf>

### 30 August:

A talk on Herbal Medicines by David Callaghan from the National Trust at Chedworth Roman Villa will take place at Fairford Library at **5.30pm**. Free but booking advisable. Contact Fairford Library for further details on 01285 712599.

### 11 December:

U3A Christmas Lunch at The Crown of Crucis.

# GROUP EVENTS

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

## Birdwatching

*Tuesday 17 July*

This month's walk will be in the Whelford Pools area. As I am away, Pete has very kindly agreed to lead it. Meet at the Fairford car park at 9am as usual. The walk should be finished in time for lunch at home. Pete can be contacted on 01285 713069.

There will be no meeting in August

Richard Morgan  
01285 712085

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## Book Circle 1

There will be no meeting in July. Next time we meet will be at my house on Tuesday 14th August when we shall discuss two books, 'The Troubled Man' by Henning Mankell and 'Snowdrops' by A.D. Miller.

Please let me know if you are unable to come.

Denny Rawlinson  
01285 711009

## Book Circle 2

*Tuesday 10 July & 14 August*

In July we shall meet at my house to discuss 'Fire Season' by Philip Connors; and in August we meet at Sue's house to discuss 'The Return' by Victoria Hislop.

Please let me or Sue, as appropriate, know if you will not be able to attend.

Kevin Hannigan 01367 250246  
[hannigan100@hotmail.com](mailto:hannigan100@hotmail.com)  
Sue Middleton  
01285 713914

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*'Some books are to be tasted,  
others to be swallowed, and some  
few to be chewed and digested.'*

Francis Bacon

## Bridge Improvers

The group will continue to meet on Monday afternoons, 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd July, from 2 to 4pm in the Heritage room, Fairford Community Centre. No Bridge on 30<sup>th</sup> July.

During August we shall meet alternate Mondays, on 6th and 20th August, and then 3rd September.

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

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

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## Chess

The chess group meets monthly on a Wednesday. Contact details below for more information.

Mike Bennett  
01367 252379  
[mish252379@btinternet.com](mailto:mish252379@btinternet.com)

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## Computer Group

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

For those wanting to start using email, I can allocate you a personal email address based on our website address for your sole use.

Nick Humphris  
01285 711740

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## Cycling with a Pub Lunch

*Wednesday 25 July*

Meet at Fairford car park for a leisurely ride along country lanes to The Red Lion at Castle Eaton where lunch will be taken by the river - in the sunshine of course!

The return route ascends Luss Hill to Hannington. The long climb will be rewarded by a long glide down the hill to Hannington Wick and Kempsford.

Leave Fairford at 10.30am

Phil Trickett  
01285 712421

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*'A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing,  
the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.'*

James Dent

## Family History 1

*Wednesday 18 July*

Sue Middleton will be talking to us in July at my house at 2.30pm. No meeting in August, Clive in September, Margaret in October. The material on divorce which I had prepared for June's meeting will come in handy in November!

Please make sure that these dates are in your diary and let me know *in good time* if you are not able to come on 18 July.

Miriam Scott  
01285 713441

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## Family History 2

*Wednesday 18 July*

The next meeting will be at my house at 2.30pm. We shall hopefully discuss our programme for the next few months.

There will be no meeting in August

Michael Johnson  
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk  
01285 712637

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*'Summer has set in with its usual severity.'*  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

## Five Rhythms Dance

*Wednesday 18 July*

(change of venue )

Once again we plan to dance on the lawn at Joyce's house in Poulton at 10am. Anyone needing a lift or directions should phone me, Joyce Deane, on the number given below. Tea and biscuits will be served after the dance. Please let me know if you plan to attend.

There will be no meeting in August.

Joyce Deane  
01285 851408

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## French Conversation

**Intermediate**

*July, August*

Chers amis

I am away for most of July and I imagine that many of you will be away at various times during August. I will email suggested dates for September, so keep an eye on your Inbox in late August!

Amities, et Bonnes Vacances!

Rosemary Westlake  
01285 712329  
idrwestlake@gmail.com

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## French Conversation

**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! **From September Barbara Cartwright will be the new leader.**

Kevin Hannigan  
01367 250246  
hannigan100@hotmail.com

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## Garden Group

*Thursday July 19*

We are off to visit Stone House Garden at Wyck Rissington this month - see map ref 12 in Cotswolds Gardens Guide 2012. Mrs Lukas will not be there. However, she is perfectly happy for us to visit her garden and just let ourselves in and out, which seems very kind of her. The cost is £5 per head and £2 for petrol contribution. Apart from visiting her garden and taking our time there, she also suggested we might like to visit the church where a young Gustav Holst was organist there in 1892. Can we meet in the car park at 1.30pm? As there will be no tea facilities it might be a good idea to take a drink. Please let me know if you are interested in coming on this trip. 8

*Thursday August 16*

The home of the naked gardeners is this month's venue! Abbey House Gardens in Malmesbury looks like a garden brimming with interest with plenty to see and a tea room too. The concession cost is £7 per head and £2 for petrol contribution. Please can we meet at 1.30pm in the car park? Please let me know if you are interested in this outing. Don't worry, I have checked to make sure this is not a clothes optional day! Unfortunately our 2 for 1 Gardeners' World cards are not valid until September.

Penny Phillips  
01285 711360  
pennyrphillips@gmail.com

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*'Our England is a garden that is  
full of stately views,  
Of borders, beds and shrubberies  
and lawns and avenues,  
With statues on the terraces and  
peacocks strutting by;  
But the Glory of the Garden lies  
in more than meets the eye.'*

From 'The Glory of the Garden' by  
Rudyard Kipling

## Geology

*Wednesday 11 July*

Our summer field trip will take the form of a visit to Clearwell Caves in the Forest of Dean. The cost to enter for seniors is £5.50. The route through the cave system (historic iron workings) is self-guided and takes around 1 to 1½ hours. There are refreshments at the café on site. On the way we thought it would be good to pass by the 900 square feet Geomap Sculpture of the Forest of Dean, opened in 2008 and found at the picnic site at New Fancy View (Grid 628095), about a mile east of the village of Parkend. Clearwell Caves are located about a mile and a half south of the town of Coleford (grid 576082).

Please meet at Fairford car park at the top of the High Street at 9.30am. We should be back by 3.30pm.

Clive Watson  
01285 713003

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## German Circle

There will be no meetings until September. Please contact me for further details.

Karin Forman  
01367 252675

## Keep Fit

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

Eddie Rosser  
01367 252504

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## 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

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## Model Group

The Model Group meets weekly on Thursday mornings.

Please contact:

Jim Sullivan  
01367 252539

**See also report page 20**

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## Music Listening

*Friday 20 July*

We shall be using music to reminisce over Holiday Memories this session. We meet at 2.30pm.

There will be no meeting in August.

Mary Chick  
01285 712126

## Needlework

The Needlework group will meet on 4th and 18th July and 1st, 15th and 29th August, at the Chapel.

For further details please contact:

Thelma Hardie  
01285 713971

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## Pétanque

As we now have our very own permanent piste sited at Farmor's School, we shall be playing there weekly from now on.

David and Heather Baber  
01285 711343

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## Philosophy

*Wednesday 18 July*

Our next meeting will be held at Manus Moran's house. The subject will be Bureaucracy.

Dan Deane  
01285 851408

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## Poetry Circle 1

The poetry group meets on the first Friday of the month. Our next meeting will be on 7th September.

Barbara Cottam  
01285 711054

## Poetry Circle 2

*Friday 6 July*

We shall be meeting at Denny's house at 2.30pm and looking at the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins. If you are interested in joining this group we should be very pleased to welcome you.

Mary Chick  
01285 712126

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## Postcard Group

*Tuesday 17 July*

We shall meet again at my house at 2.30pm when we shall welcome Keith Williams of Lechlade History Society. Keith is responsible for the superb illustrated information boards which are displayed at various locations in Lechlade, so we can look forward to an interesting afternoon. The theme letter for cards this month will be 'K'.

There will be no August meeting.

John Higgs  
01285 712488

## Recorders

Our next meetings will be on Friday afternoons 13th and 27th July (this will be our last meeting before the August break and we'll start again on 14 September). 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, 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.

If there are any more recorder players who would like to join a friendly, non-judgemental group, please contact:

Hilary Bradshaw

01793 720037:

hilary@burytown15.co.uk

or Jay Mathews

01367 253510:

jaymathews124@mac.com for further information.

Please ask if you need to borrow an instrument or stand.

## Rummikub

*Thursday 12 July and 9 August*

The group usually 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

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## Short Tennis

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

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

Margaret Trickett  
01285 712421

## 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  
fkhall@talktalk.net

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## Solos

Our July meeting was on the 2nd at Janet Lucas's house in Kempsford.

The August meeting is to be arranged. Please note from now on our meetings will start at 2.30pm.

If singles can't make the monthly meeting but are interested in joining us in our activities, please contact me.

Michael Johnson  
01285 712637  
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk

## Straddlers

*Thursday 19 July*

What a splendid walk! If you like sleepy Cotswold villages, super views, and gentle ambles this is for you. We start in Snowhill, and then stroll to Stanway via Lidcombe Hill and Wood, along the Winchcombe Way. Potter along the Cotswold Way to Stanton and then on to Laverton. From there we go back up onto the plateau and walk down through Littleworth Wood on the way back to Snowhill. Impressive views all along the way, and very pretty cottages, all in glorious sunshine. Total distance is a short nine miles, there are a few sharp inclines, but as there are more descents, poles might be useful. Free parking is at the public car park between The Snowhill Arms and Snowhill Manor. Coffee and lunch to be carried. Assemble at Fairford at 9.15am or at Snowhill at 10am. Passenger fee should be £3.

Paul O'Shaughnessy  
01367 850262

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*'SUMMER ends now; now, barbarous in beauty, the stooks arise  
Around; up above, what wind-walks! what lovely behaviour  
Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, wilful-wavier  
Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?'*

From Gerard Manley Hopkins. Hurraing in harvest

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*'Winter's thunder and summer's flood  
Never boded Englishman good'*

J Ray English proverbs 1670

## Straddlers

*Thursday 16 August*

The walk is only 7 miles but as it straddles a valley there are some hills. The June monsoon was in full swing the day we reconnoitred the walk, so between then and August we will try and find a way round the wetter areas. Suffice it to say boots are the preferred footwear, unless there is an August drought. The walk starts at Bulls Cross, descends through Longridge Wood and out to open views of the valley. We cross Dillay Brook and head up through some more woods, touching the Wysis Way on our way to Slad and a nice flat stroll back to Bulls Cross. This area is where Laurie Lee set Cider with Rosie and is as beautiful as it is portrayed.

Meet at Fairford car park at 9.15am or Bulls Cross for 10am. Suggested passenger fee is £2. Please bring tea/coffee and a packed lunch.

Tony and Kay Clarke  
01285 712794

## Striders

*Tuesday 24 July*

Our walk this month begins from the Black Horse Inn in the village of Cranham. Its length is six miles and is one of woodland walking on an undulating path. When I walked it in June it was very muddy. Hopefully it will be drier in July. The walk will take us past three public houses and through the pretty village of Sheepscombe. The scenery is stunningly beautiful which is excellent compensation for a moderately challenging walk.

We are able to order our meals at the Black Horse Inn before we start out at 10am. Might I suggest that we meet at Fairford car park for a 9am start, or at the pub a little before 10am.

It is 21 miles to Cranham. £3 a head should be enough for a passenger.

If you would like me to email you a route map, request by email or telephone.

Philip Meaden  
01285 713917  
philipgmeaden@btinternet.com

## Striders

*Tuesday 28 August*

The walk will begin and end at The Ship Inn at Brimscombe on the road from Cirencester to Stroud. The route is six miles and a bit and climbs from the start up to Besbury Common.

On reaching the Common we shall follow field paths to Hyde and Cowcombe Wood beyond. Crossing the main road we reach a steeply descending path to cross the railway, finally reaching the towpath of the Severn-Thames Canal which we follow back to Brimscombe.

The paths through the woods could be quite muddy (horses!) so boots are recommended. Shorts wearers are advised that there will be a few nettles.

Leave Fairford car park at 9.20am to arrive at The Ship at 10am when we can order our lunches and use the loos. Brimscombe is 20 miles from Fairford so suggested passenger fee is £3 depending on number of passengers.

Margaret and Phil Trickett  
01285 712421

## Strollers

*Friday 27 July*

Get some exercise - before the TV sit-in for the opening of the Olympic Ceremony at home later and enjoy our stroll this month which starts at the Old Spotted Cow (SN6 6LQ) Marston Meysey.

Surprisingly, whilst our walk begins by following the southern perimeter of the airfield at RAF Fairford, there is little evidence of any blot on the landscape caused by the military. Joining the little used road at Dunfield, we continue southwards past Cox's Farm, across some undulating countryside back to the pub for lunch.

Some of the walk follows bridleways and also includes a couple of high stiles. Needless to say, good footwear is essential.

The distance is approximately three miles. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.30am or 10am at the pub. Suggested passenger fare is £1. Any questions or queries, please contact:-

Bert Sampson  
01285 712789  
d.sampson789@btinternet.com

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*'If the twenty-fourth of August be fair and clear,  
Then hope for a prosperous autumn that year'*

T Fuller. Gnomologia Adages and Proverbs, 1732

## Traditional Jazz

*Thursday 5 July and 2 August*

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

We shall continue with our programme of comparing the reedmen (clarinet and saxophones) throughout jazz. In July we shall listen to American reedmen from the 1940s revival, then in August we listen to jazz up to the present day from Europe, including the UK.

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

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### **Please note:**

There are no Strollers and Walking and Pub Lunch walks in August

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*'In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light  
In summer quite the other way  
I have to go to bed by day.'*

Robert Louis Stevenson

## Walking and Pub Lunch

*Wednesday 11 July*

The July walk starts at the War Memorial at Amberley on Minchinhampton Common. The walk crosses the Common to Burleigh, then follows a narrow lane to Besbury Common, back up to the Minchampton side of the Common, then across the golf course to Amberley. The walk is about four miles. We shall lunch at the Black Horse at Amberley and order on arrival for about 12.30pm. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.25am or 10.15am at Amberley War Memorial - parking is opposite the memorial. Distance from Fairford approximately 20 miles, suggested passenger fee £3. As ever, walking boots recommended.

Ann Wightman  
01285 712723

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## Yoga

The Yoga group meets weekly on Mondays at the Community Centre at 10.15am.

Sylvia Jones  
01285 712657

# GROUP REVIEWS

## Birdwatching

With floods throughout the country we were not sure what would greet us on our visit to the Somerset wetlands. Some areas further west had been devastated and there was certainly a lot more water than usual for this time of year at the reserves we visited.

Luckily the two great white egrets that had nested for the first time ever in the UK had managed to raise their three chicks successfully, though we only saw the adults feeding. The bitterns have had a bad year, but we did see several adults flying around, so some young may have survived the increased water level. We saw plenty of reed warblers, heard lots of cetti's warblers and blackcaps but saw few other little birds. One scrape normally attracts a good number of waders, but the water levels were too high and there were none to be seen. A male marsh harrier gave us a good close display and there were plenty of hobbies flying around.

We enjoyed a warm sunny day and were able to relax in the sun for our lunch. In the end our total list of species was very good, even if bird numbers were lower than expected.

Richard Morgan

## Philosophy

The subject for discussion was a quote from Richard Holloway. "The toughest lesson life teaches is the difference between who you wanted to be and who you actually are"; an ideal subject for an aging group. What followed were some very interesting personal anecdotes. The teenage years, when many career choices are made, are necessarily the time when helpful information should be available and this came out in the discussion. Those of us who knew what we wanted to do early on were reasonably satisfied with our choices. The remainder who had had no firm ambition had succeeded and were fairly happy at the way things had turned out. Family background and environment, which might have exerted some influence, apparently in our group could be discounted.

Dan Deane



## Book Circle 1

In June a small group of us met to discuss *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, an unforgettable story told from the viewpoints of three very impressive women: the time 1962, the place Jackson, Mississippi. The US may now have a black President, but fifty years ago 'coloureds' were not allowed to be educated at the same school, sit together on a bus or even use the same bathroom as white people.

The three narrators are black maids, Aibileen middle aged and raising her seventeenth white child, Minny forever losing jobs because of her sassy tongue, and Skeeter an aspiring young white writer raised by black maids all her life, and awakening to the terrible injustice and prejudice she sees all around her. These three women team up to produce newspaper articles that will put them all at risk in an attempt to change the minds of Jackson residents.

Stockett manages to convey fear, violence and bigotry alongside moments of immense courage, joy and tenderness.

This is a poignant book which, although fiction, is based on history remembered by us all and we found it an engrossing read.

Denny Rawlinson

## **New course at Fairford Community Centre starting in September Life Writing**

Explore how to write memoir, autobiography, biography and family history.

Eight sessions will include critiques of published works, writing exercises, advice on how to develop your skills as a writer. The aim of the course is to open up different ways to write about life (yours and others').

Fairford Community Centre, Fridays 10am–12, beginning 21 September 2012.  
£12 per session.

For more information and booking in advance, please contact Christine Kidney by email, [christine@elbowbooks.com](mailto:christine@elbowbooks.com)

## Book Circle 2

Jiang Rong's 'Wolf Totem' is a Chinese best-selling novel, based on his memories of time spent on the Inner Mongolian grassland as a student of the Cultural Revolution. Chen Zhen, a Han Chinese intellectual, becomes fascinated by the lives of the nomads who are in a constant struggle for survival with the Mongolian wolves. He comes to understand the interdependence of all the creatures of the steppe: without the wolves to feed on the gazelles, horses, sheep, marmots and mice, grass is overgrazed, mouse burrows proliferate and the land degrades. Chen is a witness to the final years of nomadic life, coming to respect, fear and even love the wolves which are a constant threat to all. At the heart of this book are the wolves – their dramatic, devastating hunts; their role in the history of the Mongols; their patterns of behaviour and, eventually, their extermination. Chen attempts to raise a wolf cub but the enterprise is doomed; as men with automatic rifles hunt the wolves in jeeps, his cub fights for freedom and suffers before being killed – by Chen.

The majority of us agreed that this is well worth reading. It is overlong with little exploration of character and a weak structure, but it creates a vivid picture of a lost world. The description of a virgin pasture, heavy with peonies and wild flowers, watered by a swan lake is one which few of us will forget. There is violence in the battles of the natural world, and tragedy as the grassland turns into desert; but there is also great beauty, courage and strength. Recommended.

Sarah Basley

*'Despite the author's refusal to participate in any marketing activities, deals for adaptations of the novel into other media and translations into other languages have set various financial records...A number of other writers took advantage of the author's anonymity to write fake sequels to Wolf Totem, including two books both entitled Wolf Totem 2, as well as the 250,000-character long Great Wolf of the Plains all with the imprint of the Changjiang Arts Publishing House. As a result, in April 2007, he issued a statement which denounced all such "sequels" as fraudulent;...'*

Wikipedia

## Family History 2

Michael Johnson presented us with a history of his working life as a gardener and how we could do something similar of our own.

It was mostly in pictures with a short explanation and started with his first job at the age of about sixteen in 1954 in a large house called Chipstead Place, through all the gardens he worked in right up until he moved to Quenington in 1971 where he worked until 1976. It was a most interesting record showing pictures of the houses and their beautiful gardens and where and what many of them look like today. Some of the houses have been partly or wholly demolished to make way for new housing developments. Some still flourish with much diminished gardens. He was able to find some pieces remaining, like the ornamental arch that can still be seen at the back of a housing estate. He compared the gardening practices of years ago with today's gardeners. This was before the age of plastic and so the greenhouses showed clay pots which had to be scrubbed by hand, by the gardener's boy, of course, and rows of wooden troughs and hessian covers and the boilers that had to be stoked for the greenhouses.

An altogether fascinating history, beautifully recorded, which we were all able to sit and watch. It will hopefully inspire others to have a go at something similar.

Josephine Toomer

*'...For where the old thick laurels grow, along the thin red wall,  
You'll find the tool- and potting-sheds which are the heart of all  
The cold-frames and the hot-houses, the dung-pits and the tanks,  
The rollers, carts, and drain-pipes, with the barrows and the planks.*

*And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and 'prentice boys  
Told off to do as they are bid and do it without noise ;  
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to scare the birds,  
The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words.  
And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,  
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that grows ;  
But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand and loam,  
For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.'*

From 'The Glory of the Garden' by Rudyard Kipling

## Model Group—Bonjour Matelot!

One Thursday at Horcott Lake there was a sudden outburst of swearing, and then a huge lump of wood thrown from the bushes at one of the model boats. Ray and I decided to investigate. When we got to the scene the fisherman had 'gone to ground' and zipped himself into his tent.

After a brief, strong and frank exchange of views with the inarticulate young man, which included the phrase 'stupid gay sailor', we returned to our boats.

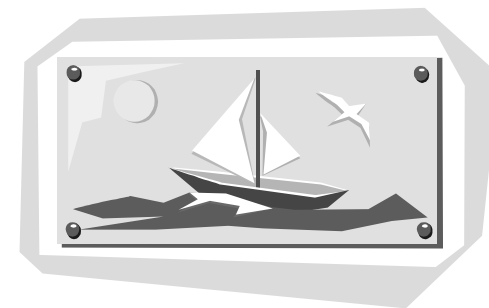
I decided that the Lakes Warden, Fred, should know of this incident because the fisherman should not have been there. "Right" said Fred, and off he marched. Fred is small and very proud of his lakes. After about 20 seconds the lakes area was resounding with the sound of swearing, drowning out the gentle noise of our electric motors, the birds, the gravel diggers nearby, and the huge plane overhead. It was not the youth swearing. It was Fred. I now understood why he had taken out his hearing aid. A swearing gunfight was in progress and it was Fred who emerged the easy winner.

Fred came over and said, "I have got his licence. He is banned, packed up, and off the site. He will get a letter from the Angling Secretary tomorrow".

I felt sorry for this young keen fisherman. He lost his rag with a model boat and had no people or communication skills at all. Yes, I feel sorry for him, but that is probably because I am a 'stupid gay sailor'. Come to think of it, I don't think he got that completely right either.

Ian Westlake

PS The young fisherman has been re-instated



## Poetry Circle 1

On the eve of the Jubilee celebrations eight of us met to consider quotations and whence they came. On arrival we were treated to a delightful vision of Celia wearing colourful patriotic dress having been to a prior celebration in Lechlade.

As we may have expected, some of the passages read evoked memories of people, places and feelings.

We were reminded that "A little learning is a dangerous thing"; "All the world's a stage", and "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all"; sentiments with which we were all in agreement.

Amusing quotes came from John with Kipling's 'Betrothed', and from Ken with his clever humour choosing two passages from Alec Guinness.

Ian's own extremely thoughtful poem about 'a Bath Abbey tomb' was interestingly comparing and contrasting with Larkin's 'Arundel Tomb', culminating in the survival of love.

Pathos came from Marie with 'Hardy's Drummer Hodge', and from Celia the emotional heartfelt words by Laurence Binyon, 'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old : Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn'.

Age unfortunately is something affecting most of us.

Kay Padgett

*'Into my heart an air that kills  
From yon far country blows:  
What those blue remembered hills,  
What spires, what farms are those?*

*That is the land of lost content,  
I see it shining plain,  
The happy highways where I went  
And cannot come again.'*

From A Shropshire Lad by A E Housman  
(One of Humphrey Gillett's favourite quotes)

## Garden Group

Our June outing went ahead even though the weather was a bit suspect and the rain descended just as we arrived at our destination! Our venue was TWIGS community gardens at Cheney Manor. TWIGS stands for Therapeutic Work in Gardening Swindon and is part of the Richmond Fellowship. Its main aim was and is to help people to overcome mental health problems. It is an area of eleven small themed gardens, two acres of wildflower planting to encourage the bees and insects and a number of crafts displayed throughout, from the snake in the tree by the entrance, to the woodpecker hiding in the branches of a tree near the polytunnels - both made out of wire. There was also a good range of home-grown plants for sale, including many types of wildflower, and I think most of us went home with a little something for the garden, fairly priced and great to know that they were grown there and our visit helped to boost their funds.  
Penny Phillips

## Striders

Guess how many people joined me at The Fox in Little Barrington for the walk today? Four. Four? Yes, 4! As all were from Lechlade I assume that Fairford was closed on Tuesday 26th June?! The book said it was six miles, but as it took just a couple of minutes under three hours it must have been about seven – not helped by a mistake by the leader which added at least ¼ mile to the total! Well - we had loads of mud at the beginning, then 60% of the way through the rain started; and to help matters along there was the passage along a very narrow path with vegetation waist high on both sides which ensured that shorts/trousers were soaked!

For the record, we went via both Barringtons, across fields, past disused quarries to Sherborne, then Windrush and back to The Fox, where we met a group of cyclists who were even wetter than us! Look what you missed!!

Kevin Hannigan

## Straddlers

In April, Fairford became a member of Walkers are Welcome, an association of towns and villages which aim to promote use of their local footpaths and encourage businesses to welcome walkers. As Ian is involved in this initiative, he proposed a local walk for May – a 10 mile circular, from Fairford to Lechlade, and back.

The day was cloudy, but not cold – and it didn't rain! Eighteen walkers turned up, some regular Straddlers, others attracted by the idea of discovering the proposed route to Lechlade. We found this part of the walk very interesting and varied, passing through the Whelford Nature Reserve, seeing how some of the newer lakes have been landscaped, crossing an area where gravel extraction is currently under way, seeing what Lakes by Yoo are up to, following their diverted footpath (the most difficult walking of the day) and arriving in Lechlade along paths across fields.

Half of the group ate their picnic lunch at this point; the others had made arrangements to be picked up or planned to get home by bus. The rest of us made our way back to Fairford across fields – pleasant, easy walking.

It was good to have 'new' walkers with us on this occasion. We hope you'll consider joining the Straddlers again in the future.

Rosemary Westlake

## Strollers

I sat outside the Blunsden Pub at 10.15am when four stalwart U3A members joined me for the walk.

The ground was generally very wet and we all had to take great care. The normal great views from Castle Hill of Cricklade and Castle Eaton were shrouded in mist. We carried on in close formation and managed to keep to the designated route. Right at the last, one of our number had a muddy landing as the ground slid from under him, but no great damage done.

We got back to The Heart in Hand Pub for lunch and we were not disappointed.

The food, the drink and the company were excellent, and as the five of us made our way home with steam coming off our damp clothes we all agreed that it had been a very enjoyable outing.

John Yorke

## Timetable of Group Activities

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

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

Please send items for the

### September

issue to Alison Hobson email:  
editor@fairfordu3a.org.uk by

**Friday August 24th**