

Please send items for the
September issue to
Marilyn Gibbon
editor@fairfordu3a.org.uk
by **17th August**



Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 219

July/August 2015

PLEASE NOTE:

**Some groups will not be
holding their usual
meetings during July and
August.**

**Please check with your
Group Leader**



**One Egg or Two?
Rosemary Prosser**



www.fairfordu3a.org.uk
Registered Charity No 1072658



Today, 7 July

***One Egg or Two?* Rosemary Prosser**

talks about her 30 years in Farmhouse Bed and Breakfast. 'One Egg or Two?' was the question she always asked her guests at breakfast time.

General Meetings

4 August 2015

This is a walking tour of **Oxford**. Please contact Marilyn Gibbon (01285 713928) for full details

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm Forthcoming events

1 September 2015

'A Policeman's Lot.' Alan Rodgers tells us of his experiences during his 30 years in the police force.

6 October 2015

'The Mitfords; Their Times and Their Friends.' Di Whitaker tells of the Mitfords whose exploits were seldom out of the press during the 1930s and 40s. She worked for Pamela, the least known of the family. The Mitfords' friends included the Queen Mother, Hitler and the literati of the age, including Evelyn Waugh, John Betjeman (who was in love with Pamela), the Huxley and Sitwell families. Pamela's youngest sister, Deborah, became the Duchess of Devonshire and died in September 2014.

3 November 2015

'The Origin of Pub Signs.' Angela Panrucker talks about Pub Signs and their history.

Photo Album

If you have any interesting photographs of U3A activities, please pass them to Ann Wightman (01285 712723) for inclusion in the album

Chairman's Report:

20th Anniversary – BBQ – Thursday 2 July

Our celebration for our 20th Anniversary is fast upon us. I hope as many of you as possible will join us at **Bowmoor Sailing Club** (directions in last month's newsletter) on **Thursday 2 July** from midday to about 4.00pm to enjoy a BBQ, Ukulele band, Aunt Sally, model boats and, of course, the cutting of the celebration cake. Please provide your own food and tables and chairs (there are a few picnic tables). We will provide BBQ, and willing hands to man it, wine, soft drinks and the cake! If the weather is not fine we can still go ahead indoors.

U3A Flags

Thanks to a sterling effort by Michael Yorke, we now have brand new Fairford and District U3A flags flying in Lechlade and soon, we hope, in Fairford. They look a lot smarter than the old ones and are another nice way to celebrate our 20th Anniversary.

Oxford Walking Tour – Tuesday 4 August

Those of you going on this trip, please pay the remaining £10 in addition to your £5 deposit, to Marilyn Gibbon by **7 July** at the latest. The coach will leave Fairford Church at **9.00am** and Lechlade Memorial Hall (on the main road) at **9.10am**, hopefully arriving in Oxford about 10.00. At the end of the day we will return home about 3.00pm to arrive back about 4.15pm.

Meeting Dates

Please remember, we do not have a normal monthly meeting in August, nor do we publish a newsletter. The next meeting after Tuesday 7 July will be on Tuesday 1 September.

I hope you all enjoy the summer and look forward to seeing you at the Anniversary BBQ on Thursday 2 July.

Best wishes,
Jan Mills

Editor this month:
Don Cobbett

Tea Rota

1 September : Chess
6 October : Computers
3 November : Cycling with PL

Job Vacancy – Membership Secretary
 * Jilly Salvat, our Membership Secretary, will be leaving the *
 * area at the end of the summer, so we are in need of a new *
 * Membership Secretary as from 1 September. If this is a role *
 * you feel you may be able to fill, please speak to myself or a *
 * committee member for more information. *
 * Jan Mills *
 * 01285 850384 *

New Members
 We're pleased to welcome:
 Gwyneth Ambler
 Mervyn and Amanda Cully,
 Craig Fallon,
 Sylvia Orchard-Ward,
 Susan Sosbe

Reminder
 Should you change your email address, or any other of your details, will you please let the Membership Secretary know, so that our records can be up to date.
 Jilly Salvat
 jillyarna@hotmail.com

2016 Diaries
 We have been advised by National Office that next year's U3A diaries can be ordered from 1st June and they will start dispatching orders from August.
 They have not advised us of the unit price, but I imagine they will be the same or similar to the 2015 diaries; I now have this information.
 I will correlate orders, so please contact me directly. Covers this year will be Dark Green.
 Michael Yorke
 01367 253286
 yorkey7@hotmail.co.uk

Appeal
Royal International Air Tattoo
Friday 17 & Sunday 19 July
Lechlade Lions Club has asked me to enlist help from U3A volunteers for Friday 17 July and Sunday 19 July on the Blue Gate entry-point. Duties are to check entry tickets and remove counterfoils, explain the re-entry process (hand stamp) and direct visitors to the Programme Sellers and the Child-tagging point.
 An early start is required, and duty normally finishes by 2.00pm, and thereafter, entry to the Show is free for helpers.
 If anyone feels that they could assist on one of the days, please contact me and I will give you further details.
 Michael Yorke
 01367 253286

U3A National Annual General Meeting,
Thursday 27 August
 The U3A National AGM will take place in Nottingham.
 We have received the following documentation from National Office in Bromley:
 Notice and Draft Agenda of the AGM
 Election of Officers and Members on the National Committee
 Officer Nomination Form/Supporting Statement Information.
 If any member is interested in attending this meeting or would like a set of this documentation, please contact me.
 Michael Yorke, Secretary
 01367 253286
 Yorkey7@hotmail.co.uk

Calling all Group Leaders

Will any Group Leader who does not have a badge please contact Jilly Salvat, Membership Secretary. It would be appreciated if all Group Leaders could wear their badge at the General Monthly Meetings to identify themselves. Any member who may be interested in hearing more about a particular group would then be able to identify the Group Leader for information.

Lilian Pooley
Group Co-ordinator

2015—A year of Centenaries . . .and Mud!

1215 - Magna Carta. According to Dan Snow in a recent documentary, King John agreed to sign the document with the barons at Runnymede because, being in the flood plain of the Thames, it would not be possible for either side to assemble an army on the muddy and marshy ground.

1415 - Agincourt. Ranulph Fiennes, in his description of the battle, states that it was fought in a valley with woods on either side and that there was a lot of rain in the days before the battle. The leading French knights jostled for the centre ground, to gain greater glory. As they advanced, King Henry's longbow men kept the French knights in the valley and they floundered in the mud. Henry won the day

1815 - Waterloo. In the Guards Museum, visited by several of us earlier this year, pictures show guardsmen in various past battles. One showed a Guards private in the mud before the battle. The night before the battle it rained and created more mud.

1915 - The Somme. At our January meeting this year, Graham Gordon, from the Museum of Gloucestershire Regiments, spoke of this battle. Many of the soldiers who died were trapped in their trenches and literally drowned in the mud - the remains of many of them lie in the collapsed trenches to this day.

Our June Meeting – The History of Pinewood Studios

A nostalgic afternoon.....



One day at Pinewood Studios a new-born baby was required on the film set. No one had thought to make any arrangements! It was known that a lady in a nearby house had recently given birth. Answering a knock on the door, the new mother was greeted with the request, "Could we borrow your baby, please?" "Yes, of course!", she replied. Just one of the anecdotes which Mike Payne, from Princes Risborough, with his life-long interest in films, acting and the stars, related at the June meeting. By the way, that little baby today is an airline pilot!

The studios are built in the grounds of Heatherden Hall, a Victorian manor house built in the Georgian style, in the Buckinghamshire village of Iver Heath. Film-making began in 1936 when J Arthur Rank went into partnership with Charles Boot, a builder who invented the name 'Pinewood' for the studios: 'pine' to take account of the trees, and 'wood' as a hidden reference to Hollywood. 'Pinewood' gained the reputation of being the best of the best. Gregory Peck was one of the first stars to come over and make a film.

Memories of the stars and their films flashed before our eyes as Mike told the story – Joan Collins, John Mills, James Mason, Diana Dors, Barbara Windsor, Alec Guinness, Anna Neagle, Norman Wisdom, Roger Moore and Sean Connery.... and so many more. When financial problems threatened to close the studios, there always seemed to be a Carry On film, a James Bond or a Superman to save the day.

Remember the 1952 film *Genevieve*? When it was finished it was put in a tin and forgotten. There came the day when another film flopped and a replacement was required. The only film available was *Genevieve*! It went like a bomb and was a huge success.

With Government requisition during the war, the land was used for agriculture; news reels and war films were produced and, with the coming of the Royal Mint, the studios could boast that they were finally making money. Today, television as well as film-making plays a great part at Pinewood.

Worth a visit? Let's keep it in mind.

Barbara Cobbett

GROUP MEETINGS

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

Ballroom Dancing

Fridays 10 and 24 July, 21 August

We meet fortnightly (as hall is available) in the Palmer Hall, Fairford, from 7.00pm to 8.00pm.
New members welcome.

Future dates: Fridays 11 and 25 September

Lilian Pooley
(Group Co-ordinator)
01367 250346
Lilian.pooley@gmail.com

Birdwatching

Tuesday 21 July

July is always a difficult month to find interesting birds so we shall visit Slimbridge where there are always plenty to be seen. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.00am. As usual we will have lunch in their restaurant. There is an entrance fee for non WWT members. The suggested passenger contribution is £3.

We will not be meeting in August.

Richard Morgan
01285 712085

Book Circle 1

Tuesday 14 July

We meet at Pauline's to discuss *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy.

Please let us know if you are unable to come.

Sheila Morgan
01285 810471
Barbara Cobbett
01285 712692

Book Circle 2 - Notice

Tuesday 21 July (Please note the change of date)

We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves by KJ Fowler. We meet at Barbara's

Tuesday 11 August

H is for Hawk by H MacDonald. We meet at Anthea's

Ian and Rosemary Westlake
01285 712329
idrwestlake@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE:

**Some groups will not be holding their usual meetings during July and August.
Please check with your Group Leader**

Bridge Improvers

Mondays 6, 13, 20 and 27 July, 7 September

The group will continue to meet every Monday afternoon throughout July from 2.00 to 4.00pm in the Heritage Room, Fairford Community Centre, for a lesson and friendly practice play.

We shall take a summer break during August and re-start, all being well, on Monday 7 September. If you play bridge and would like to improve, come and join us; we are a friendly and informal group, making mistakes and learning together.

Partners and refreshments provided.

Margaret Bishop
01285 713747
mbishop1@timetalk.co.uk

Chess

Do you know how to play chess? If not, have you ever thought about learning? Why not join us and give it a try? We play for fun and don't take it too seriously whether we win or lose, and it is a good way to keep the grey matter ticking over.

We meet once a month, usually on a Wednesday afternoon, start with a chat over tea and biscuits, and play for a maximum of about an hour-and-a-half.

Please contact me if you are interested or would like more information

Mike Bennett
01367 252379
mish252379@btinternet.com

Computer Group

The Group will not be meeting during July and August.

We meet again on ***Tuesday 1 September.***

Nick Humphris
01285 711740

Cycling with a Pub Lunch

Thursday 30 July

There is a lovely blue lane which runs from Great Barrington all the way through into Burford, running along the river, with its many birds and attractive cottages. We take the quiet lane from Sheep Street up to the main road, cross over and cruise into Holwell. Our lunch time target is The Rose and Crown at Shilton, a delightful little pub. We shall get to the Barringtons via Quenington and Hatherop. We shall return by tootling into Langford and Kelmscott. It will be a warm sunny day, so be sure to cream up for a gentle ride through lovely countryside. Meet at Fairford at 10.30am or Hatherop school twenty minutes later.

Thursday 27 August

Not sure how we will get there, but as usual it will be mainly downhill with some undulations; no idea how many of the peloton will not be on holiday, so we're not sure of the demand. It is a while since we cruised out to The Radnor Arms at Coleshill. Coming back there is a long glide down into Lechlade. There are a few ways of getting there, either Faringdon or Little Faringdon, but, come the day, we will know! (There is a small incline one way, but I forget which.) As usual, we will create our own breeze, but, as it will be bright and warm, be sure to remember the suntan cream. The round trip will be twenty-five miles, or thereabouts. Meet at Fairford for a 10.30am start.

Paul O'Shaughnessy
01367 850262
paulatscissor@btinternet.com

Dance to Five Rhythms

Wednesdays 15 July, 19 August

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

New members welcome. Come and move to the music.

Gillian Bilbrough
01285 712579
Joyce Deane
01285 851408

Family History 1 & 2

Wednesday 15 July

Hopefully, this will be the last session of the project of recording the monumental inscriptions in the New Burial Ground, Fairford, for the Gloucestershire Family History Society. Please bring one or two writing implements and a camera if you would like to take photos. Sometimes photos can be enlarged to make reading the inscriptions easier. Paper and clipboards will be provided. Please meet at St Mary's Church Porch, Fairford at 2.30pm. If the weather is inclement we shall go to the FHS Archive Room where Alison will show you some of the latest acquisitions. Please let Miriam know if you are unable to attend.

There will be no meeting in August

Miriam Scott
01285 713441

French Conversation

Intermediate

We meet on Mondays at 11.00am at my home, deciding dates from meeting to meeting.

Our sessions are great fun and new members are very welcome. Please call me for more information

Rosemary Westlake
01285 712329

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

Thursday 23 July

We shall be visiting The Old Coach House at Ampney Crucis, meeting at the Fairford Car Park at 2.15pm.

No meeting is planned as yet for August, but members will be emailed as soon as a decision is made.

Beth and Geoff Dennis
01285 712195

Geology

Wednesdays 8 July, 12 August

We shall be meeting at the Chapel in Milton Street to continue our study of rocks, concluding our work on Igneous and moving on to a study of Metamorphic rocks.

We shall also try to fix a date for a visit to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford sometime in the Autumn.

Clive Watson
01285 713003

Industrial Heritage

Thursday 16 July

This month we are having an illustrated talk by John Higgs on *The History of Air Balloons*, which date from the 17th century. The venue will be The Bull Hotel as usual, at 2.30pm.

We will not be meeting in August.

Pete Evans
01285 713069

Italian for Beginners

Mondays

Are you planning an Italian holiday?

Beginners' class in Italian we meet on Monday afternoons at my house, deciding dates from meeting to meeting. Much of our chat focuses on food and drink!

Bea Bostock
01285 750456

Keep Fit

Tuesdays

We meet in the Palmer Hall on Tuesday each week at 9.15am. New members are welcome.

Chris Pooley
01367 250346

Latin

Thursdays 2 July, 6 August, 3 September

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

Thursdays

The Model Group meets each week on Thursday mornings. Please contact:

Jim Sullivan
01367 252539

Music Listening

We shall be taking a break in July and August.

We shall resume on ***Friday 18 September*** at Rosemary and Ian Westlake's home at 2.30pm. Our theme will be *Music that Evokes a Memory*. This may be a special event, holiday, person or place.

Joyce and John Dear
01285 238537

Needlework

Wednesdays 1, 15 & 29 July, 12 & 26 August

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.

If you would like to know more, please contact

Pauline Jones
01285 851212

Pétanque

Wednesdays

We meet every Wednesday, until the autumn, at 9.45am for a 10.00am start at our piste at Farmor's School, Leafield Road entrance.

Monday 29 June: 1.00pm: Visit to Broome Manor Golf Club to play against one of Swindon U3A's teams.

Thursday 9 July: 10.00am: Visit to The Red Bull, Malmesbury to play Malmesbury U3A's team.

Date in July, to be confirmed, for an evening match with Lechlade and District Lions.

Saturday 15 August: 10.00am: Our own Melee with picnic lunch.

Friday 18 to Monday 21 September: A 3-night stay at Mill Rythe Holiday Village, Hayling Island, for a Pétanque weekend. Please make your own transport arrangements.

Heather & David Baber
01285 711343

Philosophy

Wednesday 15 July

'Old Age, how do we envisage it?' at Susan Sosbe's house.
Contact about August meeting:

Dan Deane
01285 851408

Photography

The Photography Group will not be meeting in July and August.

We meet again on ***Thursday 24 September*** at 2.00pm in the Community Centre.

Gordon Hart
01285 238641
gordonhart43@gmail.com

Poetry Circle 1

Fridays 3 July, 7 August, 4 September

The Group usually meets on the first Friday of the month, at 3.00pm, at my house 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

Friday 3 July

We meet at my house to read humorous poems.

There will be no meeting in August.

Friday 4 September

We meet at Denny's to look at the poetry of T S Eliot.

Please let us know if you are unable to come.

Jen Thoburn
01285 712397

POSTCARDS

THE ADDRESS TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE



Tuesday 21 July

The meeting will be at the usual venue at 2.30pm. The anagram challenge will be *A Girl's Name*.

Tuesday, 18 August

We shall be having a cream tea at Reg and Jen's home in their garden (weather permitting) – 2.30pm as usual. Please bring half-a-dozen related interesting postcards – maybe of a holiday, an outing or a subject.

John Higgs
01285 712488

Quilting

Wednesdays 1 July, 5 August, 2 September

This group meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 12.30pm to 2.00pm in the Barker Room of the Community Centre. New members welcome. Please phone me for more information

Jan Mills
01285 850384

Rummikub

Thursdays 9 July, 13 August

The group meets on the second Thursday of each month at my house from 2.00 to 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

Recorders

Fridays 10 and 24 July

The Recorder Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month from 2.30-4.30pm in the Farmor room of the Fairford Community Centre. We play a wide variety of music ranging from classical to blues, mostly arranged for descant, treble, tenor and bass with the opportunity to swap instruments or even learn a new one. Before each session, starting at 2.00pm, there is the opportunity to join in with a trebles-only group or to learn to play the bass - please come along if you are interested.

If you would like to join our friendly, non-judgemental group, please contact:

Hilary Bradshaw
01367 860030
hilary@burytown15.co.uk

Jay Mathews
01367 860869
jaymathews124@me.com

We have spare instruments and stands we could lend you and are always very pleased to see new members.

We will not be meeting in August, but will resume on **Friday 11 September**.



Scottish Reels

We have finished meeting for the summer and will resume in the autumn. More information later in the year.

Richard and Carol Thompson
01285 712123
Richard@RichardAndCarol.net

S, C, R, A, B, B, L, E,

Please note that there will be no further Scrabble meetings until October.

Kathleen Price
01285 712417

Short Tennis

Mondays

We meet in the Palmer Hall every Monday from 3.00pm until 5.00pm. As we only have one court we often cannot accommodate any more players, so if interested please speak to me first.

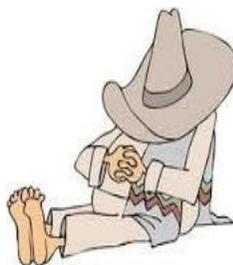
Margaret Trickett
01285 712421

Spanish

The Spanish group will be having a Long Vac from end of June to October.

We plan to resume on **Tuesday 13 October**.

Frank Hall
01285 712583
fkhall@talktalk.net



A long vac

Table Tennis

Wednesdays

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
01608 238715

Solos

Mondays 6 July, 3 August

We meet as usual at Valerie's house.

Other meetings:

Thursday 2 July: U3A 20th Anniversary BBQ at Bowmoor Sailing Club;

Saturday 11 July: Evening meal at The Falcon, Poulton;

Tuesday 4 August: U3A trip to Oxford.

Michael Johnson
01285 712637
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk

Traditional Jazz

No meeting in July as this clashes with the Fairford U3A 20th Anniversary celebration.

Thursdays 6 August, 3 September

We will meet as usual at my home.

Ian Bennett
01367 253287
ianbbennett51@gmail.com

Yoga

Mondays

The Yoga Group meets weekly on Mondays at the Community Centre at 10.00am. I am sorry there still is a waiting list.

Sylvia Jones
01285 712657

Straddlers

Thursday 16 July

This walk has been chosen mindful of those walkers who dislike hills. The route will be a meander on and around the Thames Path and is, consequently, predominantly level with some minor undulations through adjacent pastures. The distance will be approximately 8 miles visiting Kelmscot, Buscot and, possibly, Inglesham - depending on the weather and energy levels. We shall start from Lechlade Memorial Hall Car Park at 10.00am, so those travelling from Fairford Car Park should aim to depart at 9.45am. Suggested passenger donation: £1.

Alan and Gaynor Williams
01367 252052
agkwilliams@hotmail.co.uk

Thursday 20 August

This quite energetic and varied walk of eight-and-a-half miles starts in Dursley at a long-stay free car park, signposted, at the Market House in the centre of Dursley. (Don't be put off by the car park's bizarre access.) There are superb views all the way along the walk. This, of course, means there are plenty of ups and downs, some of them steep - especially on the first half of the walk along the escarpment from Dursley following the Cotswold Way. The descent is into the villages of Uley and Owlpen and continues through meadows along the little River Ewelme, and along the edge of woodland. The final climb is optional and is through Hermitage Wood and takes us back to the start at Dursley.

Please bring coffee, lunch and boots if it has been wet. Meet at Fairford Car Park at 9.15am or at Dursley at 9.50am. Suggested travel donation is £2.50

Tony Clarke
01285 712794

Striders

Tuesday 28 July

The walk is an old favourite. Starting at the Catherine Wheel in Bibury we will walk south west to join the path that takes us to Conygar Cottages, onto the minor road from Quenington, and back to the pathway, mostly across pastureland to the River Coln near Coln St Aldwyns. We then follow the river almost to the Mill at Bibury before turning west to pass the cricket ground and on to the Catherine Wheel. As many of you know this is an easy local walk, but one with lots of good views over the Cotswolds. I have arranged for some super weather so please come and join us!

Meet at the Fairford car park at 9.30am or at the pub just before 10.00am to order lunch before we walk. Please phone me in good time for me to finalise lunch numbers with the pub the evening prior to the walk.

John Burrows
01367 253056

Tuesday 25 August

It seems a long while since we set off for a gentle stroll around the Rissingtons, a delightful part of our county. We shall leave Little Rissington, having ordered our meal at The Lamb, and head for Chessils Wood, then Horseclose Copse and on to Honey Bush (how did *that* get its name?) The walk is almost stile free, and is a relatively flat ramble through lovely countryside. It is sure to be warm and sunny so do not forget the sun-cream and sun hats. We shall see you at Fairford at 9.30am or The Lamb at Little Rissington at 9.55am. Suggested travel donation is £1.50.

Paul O'Shaughnessy
01367850262
paulatsscissor@btinternet.com

Walking with Pub Lunch

Wednesday 8 July

Starting at The Seven Tuns Inn at Chadworth (GL54 4AE), this is a circular walk of 4½ miles described as 'easy walking', taking in tracks, lanes, fields and woodland with gentle inclines and two stiles. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.45am or at the Seven Tuns Inn at 10.15am to allow time to pre-order lunch. Suggested travel donation £1.

Judith Butler
01285 712600
Jenny Kinch
01367 252328

Friday 24 July

This is an easy 5-mile walk which starts at The Old George Inn (plenty of parking space) at South Cerney, GL7 5UA. It is undemanding with varied scenery, three small stiles and is mostly flat, passing through the delightful villages of South Cerney and Cerney Wick on the way. The walk takes us along disused transport systems; the Thames and Severn Canal - currently under reclamation. There is an attractive roundhouse to be viewed on the way. We also walk along the disused Andover to Andoversford railway line (Midland and Southwestern Junction Railway) and past the lakes and marshy areas for those interested in spotting birds.

Duration approximately two hours and lunch can be booked at the Old George Inn before we depart: see www.oldgeorgeinn.co.uk or 01285 869096.

Meet at the car park in Fairford at 9.30am or meet at the pub for departure at 10.00am. Suggested contribution to travel £1.

Marilyn Gibbon and Alan Topham
01285 713928

GROUP REVIEWS

Book Circle 1

The Blue Flower

This is Penelope Fitzgerald's last book and is the fictionalised story of the 18th century German poet Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis). Some critics say the book, which was written at the age of 80, is her finest and most demanding. They say it represents an interrogation of life and is not for every taste.

It is a story of early life, family and first love of Friedrich (Fritz) von Hardenberg, the eldest son of a family of 11 children of noble birth. He was well educated, taking history and philosophy at University and then required by his father to work as Assistant Director in The Salt Mines. He falls in love with 12-year-old Sophie von Kuhn.

The book describes German life – meals (cows udders flavoured with nutmeg), washing habits (linen-washing days are annual) and opium and alcohol were available as remedies for illnesses.

Sophie, whose brain is "as empty as a jug", has the gift of life and attracting irrational love. Fritz is a genius and Sophie is a nincompoop, but their love inspires Fritz's writing, romanticism and philosophy.

Members of the Circle did not admire the book; they felt that it had romanticised the story of the Hardenbergs and would have been better appreciated had it been written as non-fiction.

Pauline Dring

The early bird gets the worm
(the second mouse gets the cheese)

Cycling with a Pub Lunch

On 28 May we came out of the quiet lanes just after Ashton Keynes, went to the junction where left was towards Minety and right towards Somerford Keynes. There was no signpost so, trusting to memory (I know, I know!), we went left. Wrong decision! Within a mile and a half we knew it was incorrect. We consulted the map and retraced our pedals, and half a mile past where we came out we found the correct road. We then glided into The Bakers Arms for a very nice lunch and some liquid refreshment. It was a warm sunny day; there were six at the beginning, seven at the end. Phil B caught us up at the pub. We had two new members, Sue and Chris, who were very welcome.

Distance covered was around twenty-two miles or thereabouts, as we all start from different places. As ever, many thanks for your company, ladies and gents, on a lovely ride through delightful lanes.

Paul O'Shaughnessy

Garden

On Wednesday 27 May, we once again changed our normal day in order to visit Rodmarton House and Gardens on one of their opening days. Two members toured the house, joining the rest of us in the gardens later. Mike Johnson came with us especially to see the old style boilers used to heat the greenhouses, only to find they had been demolished years ago. Very disappointing!

in June we enjoyed a visit to Barnsley House to view the formal, the kitchen and the vegetable gardens.

Beth and Geoff Dennis

Family History 1 & 2

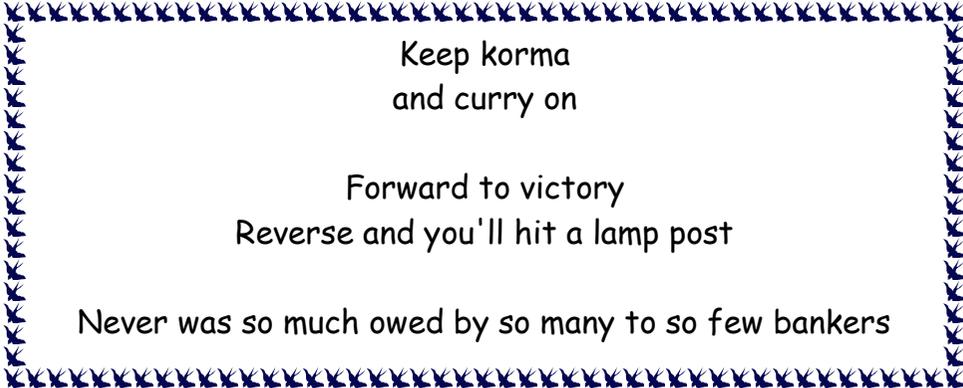
In May and June the group carried out their planned project of transcribing the monumental inscriptions in St Mary's New Burial Ground, Fairford. These transcriptions will add to and update the list previously made in 2010 by Fairford History Society (the inscriptions being an additional feature) and will also contribute towards a project by Gloucestershire Family History Society.

We were very surprised that some inscriptions only 20 years old were almost illegible and came away with firm decisions as to what type of stone and colour of lettering and what to put on our own gravestones!

During the time we were there we noticed that there were many visitors to the graveyard. It is to be hoped that somewhere very local will become available as the New Burial Ground is very nearly full.

We have had two very pleasant summer afternoons spent in a beautiful place with a lovely setting followed by tea in the FHS Archive Room. One more session in July will complete the project, apart from the data entry, of course.

Alison Hobson



Keep korma
and curry on

Forward to victory
Reverse and you'll hit a lamp post

Never was so much owed by so many to so few bankers

Industrial Heritage

Our May meeting found us in the village of Siddington exploring a section of the disused Thames and Severn canal. Our leader on this occasion was Eddy Cuss and on arrival we were briefed on its history and given detailed maps of the section we were to explore.

We began at the bridge which crosses the canal above the top lock of a staircase of four locks. We descended onto the tow path and from there it was possible to get down to what was once the base of the canal, now completely dry and overgrown. Apart from the wooden lock gates which have long gone, the lock structures are in remarkably good condition. Standing at the bottom and looking up gave an impression of how large each of them is. When they were in use and full of water this would have been hard to appreciate.

Eddy pointed out how the locks had been modified by being shortened to conserve water, which was always a concern on the Thames and Severn. He also had a series of historical photographs showing how it all looked 100 years ago.

We all learnt something from the day's outing and thanks go to Eddy for making it a very interesting and informative afternoon.

Peter Evans

Buy War Bonds

if you can remember your pin number

A teenager cannot change
its spots

Make do and mend—does not apply to false teeth

Postcards

Last month we learned that a young soldier called Joe had fought for his country on the Belgian front in the First World War and that he sent postcards back home to Marjorie (Liz's mother). We all assumed at the time that "back home" would have evoked nostalgic memories of England for this young man. We discovered this month, however, that he was not British and that he had most probably never set foot in our country! The photograph which Liz had unearthed showed that Joe was in fact a Belgian soldier, and it was obvious that his uniform was not British. From the cards which Joe sent to Marjorie it became clear that he hoped one day to pay a visit. It is thought that Joe and Marjorie were pen pals.

Perhaps we shall learn more about Joe one day if Liz has the chance to delve further into her family history.

Our anagram challenge this time relates to Trees and Shrubs:

ENRVELAD ONMIHAA HHEERAT ASHYOCI NHERIFTRO
MUICYL EMLRYT ZEADITU EBROANHM BEHAMRON

Barbara Cobbett

Answers on page 31

Charity begins at home
so best stay in the pub

Been there, done that, didn't learn
will do it again

Money talks—it says 'Goodbye!'

Philosophy

The subject for our May discussion was a quotation from Lucian Freud: *One thing more important than the person in the picture is the picture*

This rather gnomic statement was interpreted by members of the group in various ways. It could be a way of saying that the overall view is more important than an individual part. Looking at modern society there are organisations where the individual can be sacrificed for the good of the whole, and the artist's statement can support that. The group was not convinced.

A different view was that painting is an act of creation, combining materials, talent and subject. A painting can combine objects which might not exist in the same time or space, and would present a unique view. Pictures can distort reality. Apparently Lucian Freud was fascinated by the difficulty of portraying flesh.

All in all, as usual we failed to keep to the point and the discussion ranged from totalitarianism, Greek art and personal religion.

Dan Deane

Pétanque

Over the next few months we will be playing Pétanque at several different venues (details are in the Events section of the Newsletter) as well as our normal Wednesday sessions.

We shall be meeting up with many like-minded players, none of our games being league matches, just friendlies, so we can maintain a good social atmosphere. Later we shall be arranging for a return visit from the groups at our piste.

A few weeks ago we took delivery of a smart, wooden seat, which was bought out of the grant obtained for us by Reg Thoburn and set in place by Dave and Paul Freke. We shall have seating for everyone when the summer does arrive.

The garden beside the piste is now wearing its summer dress, and is open to the public at no extra cost! Thanks, Mike, for setting this up.

Heather and David Baber

Solos

After a very varied weather forecast May 28 turned out to be a glorious summer's day for our trip to Westonbirt Arboretum; and what a trip! How everything has changed since I was last there.

Our first job was to refresh ourselves with coffee, cake, and scones - diets went by the board! Yummy!

Replenished, we set forth through beautiful displays of so many colours of rhododendrons and azaleas - dark ruby reds, yellow, orange, white and pale pink. It was a feast for our eyes. Other trees were resplendent in all their greenery.

Lunch time arrived, so back to the trough once again, and a long natter about it all. The ladies wanted to shop, so we dragged the men with us. Shopping over, we set off walking again, and wended our way back to the car park. What a lovely day out. Thank you to Mike and Jim for taking us. What would we do without you?

Valerie Bevington-Wood

Never go to bed on an argument
a mattress is more comfortable

Eat, drink and be merry
for tomorrow we diet

Lavender Mahonia Heather Choisy Firethorn Lycium Myrtle
Deutzia Hornbeam Hornbeam (yes twice!)

Answers to Trees and Shrubs anagrams on page 29