



Fairford & District Newsletter

Issue 189

November 2012



All about Bagpipes by Iain Willox

www.fairfordu3a.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1072658

General Meetings

Palmer Hall, 2.30pm

4 December A Christmas
Miscellany by U3A Members

8 January (a week later than
usual). Kiss, Chase and Conkers
by Caroline Sanderson

5 February Munroe bashing
by Stuart and Ellen Thompson

New members

We welcome the following new
members:

Thomas & Linda Aston

Jim Burgess

Rosemary Campbell

Elaine Challinor

Derrick Daly

Brian Elliott

Helen Evans

Graeme & Polly Horwood

Jacqueline Houldsworth

Avril Swainsbury

Richard & Carolyn Thompson

Today, 6 November

Today our speaker is Iain Willox,
an eminent Pipe Major and
founder of the Cheltenham Pipe
Band. He will give a
demonstration and description of
Bagpipes, Scottish and others, and
will be wearing traditional
Highland Dress.

We end 2012 with 'A Christmas
Miscellany' by U3A members. Any
offers or suggestions for 'turns'
will be gratefully received by the
Committee.

Tea Rota

December 4 : Committee

January 8 : Latin

February 5 : Model Group

January Newsletter deadline

The deadline date for the first
newsletter of the New Year will
be:

Friday December 14th

To FHS members

The Fairford History Society meeting 'In fairford aforesaid' scheduled
for Thursday November 15th has been postponed to the following week
November 22nd at 7.30 pm in the Farmor Room at Fairford Community
Centre because of the Police Commissioner elections.

Enquiries Alison 01285 711768

Cover: <http://all-free-download.com>.

Thank you to Don Cobbett for his
help in researching bagpipe quotes
from the Internet

Chairman's update

The search for a new editor to replace Alison continues.

I should like to invite all members to reflect on the role and the enjoyment we all receive from having such an excellent monthly publication. It is likely the new incumbent will require some training and April 2013, when Alison resigns, will soon be upon us. The ideal solution would be a team of perhaps three or four members who can share the editorial role on a rota basis, managed by an editor who will take ultimate responsibility for the publication. There has been interest from one or two members. However, they are not in a position to take on the editorial role full time - hence the search continues. Do, please, give this matter some serious consideration so that we can all continue to enjoy our monthly publication.

Last month we successfully launched two new activity groups, Table Tennis and Archaeological Heritage. We have also been approached by Cirencester U3A for flute players.

If you have an interest you would like the U3A to pursue, please chat to Michael Yorke or myself.

Just a reminder that our Christmas lunch this year will be on Tuesday 11th December at the Crown of Crucis; it would be lovely to see as many members as possible attend. If you are attending, please return the forms, with payment, by Friday 29th November latest to Jean Crowley.

Reg Thoburn
01285 712397

Do we have any flute players in our midst?

Cirencester U3A have advised us of the establishment of a Flute Group, and have invited any interested members from our U3A to get in touch; they would be made very welcome. If any member is interested, please call me and I will give you the relevant details.

Postscript...

...any member is entitled to join an Activity or Study Group in a neighbouring U3A, so if we haven't, to date, catered for your particular interest, do please check on line to see if Cirencester run a group which would interest you.

Michael Yorke, Group Co-ordinator
01367 253286

U3A October—The Elgin Marbles

Our speaker, Martin Delingpole, acknowledged that his was a controversial subject. Arguments about the rightful ownership of the marbles has raged since Lord Elgin, then British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, removed them from the Parthenon in Athens in 1811, on the grounds that such valuable and amazing works of art were being destroyed by vandalism and neglect and it would be better for them to be re-housed and cared for in Britain. Martin clearly concurred with Lord Elgin and said that as the marbles had been created circa 490 BC when Greece as a country did not exist, they actually belonged to Turkey.

The Parthenon was built as a temple, then the Christians defaced it as a church and eventually, in 1458, it became a mosque. The sculptures are immensely beautiful. Men are depicted in poses of aggression showing rippling muscles and women in gowns revealing sensuous bodies beneath. The perspective is perfect; every fold in the cloth is represented and horses riding side by side appear to do just that, albeit carved on a flat surface.

The Greeks have spent £100,000,000 building a museum to re-house the marbles but still they remain, repaired, in various locations, but mainly in the British Museum.

The talk and high-quality slides were definitely an encouragement to go and see them.

I am especially grateful to Denny Rawlinson for drafting this report.
Sylvia Jones

Photocopying

You may remember that last month Group Leaders were advised us that it was no longer legal to make multiple photocopies of parts of books. Head Office has now advised the Committee that an arrangement has been made and it is now legal for U3A study purposes.

Michael Yorke
Group Co-ordinator
01367 253286

'Bagpipes are definitely for people with Scottish or British ancestries who can connect with a part of their history.'

Captain Will Colquhoun

Strollers and Pub Lunch Walking Groups 2013 Planning Meeting

This meeting will be held on Monday 12th November at 11.30am at The Bull Hotel, Fairford, and we look forward to seeing members who have led, or would like to lead, a walk in 2013. Maps, guides etc. are available for those who would like to volunteer for the first time - if you are uncertain, do join us at the meeting; walks are fun for leaders as well as walkers, so hopefully we can convince you.

Michael Yorke
Group Co-ordinator
01367 253286

Striders and Straddlers Annual Planning Meeting

The annual planning meeting will take place in The Bull Hotel on 13th December at 10.30am. All walkers are invited to join us to decide who will lead walks next year – and if you've never led a walk before there will be plenty of advice and encouragement to convince you to give it a try! Please try to join us for what is always a good social gathering, or contact Phil or John before the meeting with the month you would prefer to lead a walk. New and potential walkers are especially welcome.

Striders Phil Trickett 01285 712421
Straddlers John Burrows 01367 253056

FAIRFORD & DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY – KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON LISTENING

The Society's next performance is on Saturday 10th November 2012 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church, Fairford, when it will make its second contribution to Fairford's Jubilee celebrations with a concert including Parry's I Was Glad and Handel's Dettingen Te Deum. A quintet of soloists - Charlotte Newstead, Fiona Dobie and Alison Bell (sopranos), Alexei Winter (tenor) and Martin Le Poidevin (bass) - will perform Victoria's O Quam Gloriosum and Charlotte Newstead will sing Mozart's Exsultate Jubilate.

Tickets/information: <http://www.fairford.org/choralsociety>; Blenheim Antiques, Market Place, Fairford, or Fairford Opticians, High Street, Fairford. £8 (under 18 £4), or telephone 01285 713681 – or 'on the door' on the night.

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 20 November

Our task for this month is to find a short-eared owl. Last year there was a big influx of them in November and hopefully they will be back this year. Although they do hunt all day the late afternoon seems to be the time most are seen, so we shall meet at Fairford car park at 2.30pm. If I haven't been able to find any owls before the meeting we shall see what is around at Sherborne Water Meadows so bring your wellies with you.

Richard Morgan
01285 712085

Book Circle 1

Tuesday 20 November

We next meet at Pauline's at 2.30pm, again a week later than usual due to prior commitments. We shall make our book choices for 2013, so do come with lots of ideas. We welcome any new members to this group, and this meeting will be ideal for all to express their preferences. Please let Pauline know on 01285 713174 if you are unable to come, or contact me if you would like any more information.

Denny Rawlinson
01285 711009

Bridge Improvers

Do you play bridge?

If you play bridge and would like to improve, come and join us; we are a friendly and informal group, meeting every Monday afternoon (except Bank Holidays) from 2 to 4pm in the Heritage room, Fairford Community Centre, for a short lesson and friendly practice play. Partners and refreshments provided.

Margaret Bishop
01285 713747

6 mbishop@talktalk.net

Book Circle 2

Tuesday 13 November

We shall meet at Ian's house at 3.30pm to discuss 'Why be happy when you could be normal?' by Jeanette Winterson. (Why indeed?!) Please let Ian or me know if you will not be able to attend.

Ian Westlake 01285 712329
Kevin Hannigan 01367 250246
hannigan100@hotmail.com

Chess

Wednesday 21 November

The next chess meeting will be at 2.30pm, at Mike's House. Please note the earlier start.

Mike Bennett
01367 252379

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.

Please note that, as from January 2013, the group will meet on Tuesday mornings. There will be no meeting on January 1st.

Nick Humphris
01285 711740

Family History 1

Wednesday 21 November

We shall meet at Fairford Library at 2.30pm where three computers have been booked to look at records of divorce etc.

Miriam Scott
01285 713441

Family History 2

Wednesday 21 November

The next meeting is at my house at 2.30pm. John Higgs is going to give us a talk called 'Dear Edith, love Babs', based on a series of post cards. Sounds intriguing!

Michael Johnson
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk
01285 712637

Five Rhythms Dance

Wednesday 21 November

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

Gillian Bilbrough
01285 712579
Joyce Deane
01285 851408

'Twelve Highlanders and a bagpipe make a rebellion.'

Proverb cited by Sir Walter Scott

French Conversation

Intermediate

Salut tout le monde!

Our meeting dates for November are 5th and 19th. Please let me know if you will not be able to be there.

New members would be most welcome to join this group. We meet at 11am, at my home. Please contact me for more information.

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

German Circle

Please contact me for further details.

Karin Forman
01367 252675

Garden Group

Thursday 15 November

This month is our last meeting of the year and due to the high possibility of wet and cold weather instead of venturing outside and wishing we hadn't, I suggest that we meet for tea at my house to enjoy a trip into a distant Gardeners' World time to enjoy some Geoff Hamilton DVDs kindly provided by Glenda. I hope to see you here at about 2.30pm

Penny Phillips
01285 711360
pennyrphillips@gmail.com

Geology

Wednesday 14 November

The Geology group meets regularly at the Chapel in Milton Street on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm.

Clive Watson
01285 713003
Brian Routledge
01285 712853

Industrial Archaeology

The first meeting will take place on November 1st at 7.30pm in Fairford Community Centre when the way forward will be discussed. Please contact Pete Martin for further details.

01285 713908
petem91@btinternet.com

Keep Fit

The Keep Fit class 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

Needlework

The Needlework group will meet on 7th and 21st Npvember.

For further details please contact:

Thelma Hardie
01285 713971

Model Group

The Model group goes sailing on and we enjoy a good turnout each week.

However, we are about to revive the model railway section under the guidance of Colin Moulden. Colin has great plans and wants to cater for all interests.

If anyone would like to join us, please contact Colin or Jim so that we can arrange a meeting to learn what your interests are.

Colin Moulden 01285 713308
Jim Sullivan 01367 252539

Music Listening

Friday 16 November

We shall again be in the Tame Room at Fairford Community Centre for the November meeting, at 2.30pm, and look forward to seeing as many members as possible to help establish the future of this Group. We welcome new members for the first time who would appreciate a couple of hours in a warm room and convivial company, appreciating each member's musical interpretation of the theme, which for November's meeting is 'The Sea'

In the interests of forward planning, December's theme will be 'Colours'.

9 Michael Yorke 01367 253286

Pétanque

The Pétanque group meets every Wednesday morning from 10-12 noon at our piste at the entrance to Farmor's School, Fairford.

A closing date for the season has not yet been fixed as members want to continue for a bit longer.

David and Heather Baber
01285 711343

Philosophy

Wednesday 21 November

The November meeting will be at my house. The subject will be 'The Prince' by Niccolo Machiavelli.

Dan Deane
01285 851408

Poetry Circle 2

Friday 2 November

We shall meet at Doreen's house to read poems about birds.

In December we shall meet on 7th. Details of venue and subject will be notified later.

Barbara Cobbett
01285 712692

Poetry Circle 1

The poetry group meets on the first Friday of the month.

Barbara Cottam
01285 711054

Postcard Group

Tuesday 20 November

As usual, the meeting will be at my house at 2.30pm. This will be a 'board' meeting and the theme letter 'N' will be for our first meeting in the New Year. I do not plan to have a December meeting.

John Higgs
01285 712488

Rummikub

Thursday 8 November

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

Recorders

November dates for the recorder group will be the 9th and 23rd, 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.

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

*'Now let us to the bagpipes sound,
the merry, merry merry sound
Tread out a measure gay.'*

Bach's Peasant Cantata

Scottish Reels

The group meets at Poulton Village Hall from 8-10pm with a short break for refreshments on alternate Wednesday evenings.

There is a charge of £3 per person per session to cover the hire of the hall and the refreshments. Dates for November are 14th and 28th.

We welcome both beginners and those with experience. You can come alone or with your spouse, partner or friend. You do not need any ballroom dancing skills. Our teaching is very informal. We try to dance 6 to 8 reels in an evening.

We also arrange a party on New Year's Eve with supper and dancing.

Richard Thompson
01285 712123

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

Solos

Monday 5 November

The next meeting is at Hazel's house at 2.30 pm. If you are unable to attend the monthly meeting and are interested in our group, please contact me and I will keep you informed of our activities.

Michael Johnson
01285 712637
sanaelma@yahoo.co.uk

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

Straddlers

Thursday 15 November

The walk begins at Evenlode about 3 miles north-east of Stow-on-the-Wold. It is a figure of eight of about 8 miles going past Chastleton House, a National Trust property (closed in November). We start by heading east down Horn Lane and then follow the footpath through the fields past Harcomb Wood and Peasewell Wood to the cattle grid (212m).

Then south east up to Chastleton Barrow Fort, an iron age settlement, past Barrow House and along the quiet road up to the A44 which we cross at right angles. Continuing straight on until turning left down the hill to Little Compton. From there we head south west past Hogg's Barn to Chastleton House, with its impressive facade and church nestling close by. Thence back to Evenlode over the fields.

A pleasant walk with no steep hills and some very good views (hopefully). It is mainly good walking on tracks and over fields, but there may be the odd muddy patch (depending on the weather). A few stiles across the fields. Bring the usual packed lunch.

Recommended passenger fee is £3. Meet at Fairford car park at 9.10am or at Evenlode village green car park at 9.55am. Please contact me if any further information is needed.

Michael Bottomley
01285 712074

'Bagpipes - the secret behind crop circles.'

Striders

Tuesday 27 November

We start from the Farmer's Arms, Guiting Power – GL54 5TZ where we shall order food first. By then I will not get lost, so we will head out to Barton; pass various quarries, and descend to Naunton, and thence back to Guiting Power. The early part of the walk has a surprising (for me!) climb, and it was quite muddy in several places when I tested the walk on 3rd October. Some road work, a few stiles and lots of gates. Some tricky steps down in the final mile. Total distance is about 6 miles and took me 2¾ hours.

It's about 25 miles and so the cost to passengers will be £3.50. Please aim to leave Fairford car park at 9.00am to arrive at the pub by 9.45am to pre-order lunch. I will meet you at the pub.

Kevin Hannigan
hannigan100@hotmail.com
01367 250246

Strollers

Friday 23 November

A relatively gentle 1 hour and 30 minute walk in the Williamstrip and Hatherop Estates, starting from Coln St Aldwyns, and taking in some splendid views, particularly on the back half. A combination of field tracks, lanes and paths, one stile and three non-taxing gradients, and the route takes in a visit to the very pretty church at Coln St Aldwyns.

Meet at Fairford Car Park at 10am, or in the car park at the New Inn at 10.15 to order lunch and be away between 10.30 and 10.45. Fingers crossed for a fine, crisp winter morning; boots essential to deal with the possibility of some standing water in the Grandage. Driver's decision, please, on passenger fare, as it is a relatively short journey. Looking forward to seeing you.

Michael Yorke
01367 253286

Table Tennis

The group meets weekly on a Wednesday at 2.30pm in the Keble Room, upstairs in the Fairford Community Centre. There is a charge of £1 to cover room hire. It's great fun - come and join us!

Nick Stroude
13 01285 750646

Traditional Jazz

Friday 1 and 29 November

It's Ragtime!!
Whether invented by Ben Harney or Scott Joplin (whose first 'Original Rags' was published in 1899), Ragtime was said to have been all the rage at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. At our November meetings we shall include Cakewalks and Rag-time as the earliest influences on jazz. Our December meeting is brought forward to 29th November so as not to clash with a Theatre Group outing...

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

Yoga

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

Sylvia Jones
01285 712657

*'You've Been a Good Old Wagon
but You Done Broke Down' by Ben
Harney is regarded as one of the
first published ragtime songs.
[1895]*

He wasn't talking about a vehicle
either! Ed.

Walking and Pub Lunch

Wednesday 14 November

Our 4+ mile walk this month begins at the Freke Arms, Swanborough, SN6 7RN – with ample parking and an optional two-course budget menu available for £5.95.

Heading along the Hannington road (please be aware of traffic and keep to grass verges where possible), we join Staples Lane which is a gently inclining bridleway leading to Jubilee Copse. There are no stiles but the bridleways can get churned up in places by hooves, so good footwear is essential. Along a footpath towards Hannington village there are good views of the countryside. In the village, we shall pass Hannington Hall (home of the historic Freke landowning family) to St John's Church (previous buildings C1160). Whilst we shall be unable to go inside, the walk along the metalled track to the isolated Church is worthwhile for its views. Returning to the village we resume bridleways to meet part of our track back to source.

Leave Fairford car park at 9.30am for a 10am start at the Freke Arms. Suggested passenger fee £1.

Bert Sampson
01285 712789
d.sampson789@btinternet.com

'Bagpipe, the sound of Celtic soul.'

GROUP REVIEWS

Birdwatching

Our recent visits to Coombe Hill Meadows in the Severn flood plain have been thwarted through a lack of water, but this time a phone call to the warden informed me that there was too much - up to the top of her wellies on the boardwalk! A quick change of venue to the Water Park gave us a pleasant sunny walk. Unfortunately, we were too early for the usual winter visitors and the strong breeze kept most of the hedgerow birds out of our sight. However, we did manage to see both green and great-spotted woodpeckers, some red-crested pochards, some long-tailed tits and two goldcrests, in addition to all the coots and tufted ducks.

Richard Morgan

Cycling with a pub lunch - 24th October

We do not usually cycle in October as the weather/roads can be a little unpredictable, but due to overwhelming demand - well, Alan and Tom (a new member) on a Striders walk the day before - we decided to go. A call to Phil T and the four of us set off from Southrop in dry and breezy weather. Through Fyfield and up onto the top road heading for Burford. At Holwell a very kind lady explained the purpose of the plaque on the memorial, very interesting (the folk we meet whilst riding!). We got a little wayward around Kencot, but ended up at The Bell in Langford where we were joined by Gaynor, Gill and Linda (a new member) for a nice lunch; should also add Kevin H and John Y were also there (the folk we meet....). Back through Little Faringdon, then we split as usual in Southrop, going our separate ways. A little over twenty-six miles, but it seemed nothing like that as we had the wind behind us, sunshine, and it was all downhill.

Paul O'Shaughnessy

'Pipers make the best lovers because they can blow, squeeze and finger all at the same time.'

Book Circle 1

Westwood by Stella Gibbons

Stella Gibbons was born in 1902 and died in 1989. She was best known for her first novel *Cold Comfort Farm*, written in 1932, but not too many people know she had written over twenty novels, four volumes of poetry, three volumes of short stories and for some years had a career as a journalist.

Westwood, written in 1946, proved to be a popular read with the Book Circle. After an unpromising start we all enjoyed the story of Margaret Steggles, a plain girl and teacher with cultural aspirations. She falls into the seemingly exciting world of a family of North London intellectuals, but in fact these people are quite ghastly and treat her disdainfully. This story is intertwined with her best friend Hilda's involvement with the head of this family, Gerard Challis, a pompous and vain playwright with an aloof wife, spoiled daughter and her fashionable painter husband.

Hilda is a warm, happy-go-lucky and attractive girl and her parents are presented as ordinary, loving and welcoming. By contrast Margaret has a sharp and discontented mother and philandering father. All the characters are very well drawn.

There is another strand to the story which almost persuades Margaret that she is in love with a divorced man with a young daughter, but ends sadly when he marries someone else.

Apart from the human story, Stella Gibbons paints luminous pictures of gardens, autumn, Kenwood, Highgate and Hampstead Heath and the book proved a unanimous success with our readers.

Sheila Morgan

'Stella Gibbons is the Jane Austen of the twentieth century.'

The Times

Book Circle 2

We met on 9th October to discuss 'Tomorrow to be Brave' by Susan Travers, the only woman to serve in the French Foreign Legion. Several of our members felt it was boring – especially the first fifty pages about her early life, but the overall view was that it was quite an eye-opener on aspects of the Second World War, namely the pro-German behaviour of the Vichy French and the off-hand treatment of the Free French by allied forces.

She had a comparatively privileged childhood, but in a dysfunctional family with a disinterested father whose approval she sought throughout her life – and never got. She was perhaps a man trapped in a woman's body, although her sexual activity suggests that she was also 'all woman'. She spent the 1930's as a socialite, playing tennis and drifting around Europe. She got into nursing at the beginning of the war, and thence into driving staff cars which she really enjoyed. Her affairs were with officers, the most significant one being with a highly-decorated Frenchman, Marie-Pierre Koenig, who became a General and, after his death, Marshal. He probably did love her, but also used her and exploited his much more senior rank.

In her late 80's she was persuaded to reminisce, which she was prepared by then to do, because all the main players in her story were dead, and she wanted her grandchildren to know what a 'bad girl' she had been.

Kevin Hannigan

'In 1997 in a simple ceremony attended by the few remaining survivors of the corps with which she fought, the Legion presented Susan Travers, now a frail 88 year old, with the Legion d'Honneur--their highest award for bravery.'

<http://www.amazon.co.uk>

Family History 1

During our October meeting Margaret spoke about her journey since 2003 to discover her ancestors. This had been an interesting journey and gave us further insight into the various sources she had used. Margaret was now seeking ways to make her family tree more user friendly for other people to read. She had begun this by giving a detailed description of the life and idiosyncrasies of her grandmother.

Kay then showed us a beautiful tapestry she had embroidered of her and her husband's family tree – now in a frame – a real family sampler for future generations.

We continued to share ideas for recording our trees.

Thank you, Margaret, for such an interesting talk, and Miriam once again for your hospitality.

Madeline Phillips

Family History 2

Michael kindly showed us something we hadn't seen before - podcasts.

Podcasts are video clips and we looked at some on social history, including women making munitions, women in the Land Army, in the Army in France and as transport workers, as well as the Suffragette Pageant in London about 1911 and The Canterbury Tour. We learnt how easy it is to download podcasts from The National Archives site by following the links and choosing either Audio or Video to view or download.

Next, we discussed Michael's Bible and he told us that Margaret Maddox had handed the Bible down to her daughter, Emily Elkington, and it was then passed down to her son (Michael's grandfather), then to Michael's mother and is now in Michael's care. The Bible has recently been renovated with meticulous care, ensuring that all pages were bound together in twos. The hard cover on both the front and back complement the strong leather binding on the spine and on all four corners. The front-page heading states 'This London Edition of the self-interpreting Bible.' Reverend John Brown. Printed in 1819/20, some 193 years ago. The biblical text in this big volume has been enlarged and is interspersed with illustrations using wood engraving to illustrate the text.

Elizabeth Berry

Pétanque

On 26th September Dave organised a Melee for a group of twenty-four of our members which was followed by the prize-giving and a buffet lunch at the Plough Inn. Using the Olympic theme, three medals were awarded and presented by Madeleine Price. Taking Bronze was Jen Thoburn, the Silver was won by Peggy Holbrook and Pete Martin took the Gold.

Nine days later, on 5th October, a group of thirteen of our players ventured over to the Isle of Wight for a Pétanque weekend, organised by the Isle of Wight Tours. We joined a coach trip of Welsh ladies, on their way to the island from Bridport. After picking us up at Fairford, the driver decided to take his 45-minute break at Swindon Outlet Centre, where he had already left the ladies, so it was quite a while before we were actually on our way! After a few miles we were entertained by the ladies playing a few games of Bingo! Very different, but amusing. We weren't so amused when the driver missed the turning to the Ferry Port, and ended up at the entrance to a multi-storey car park! After missing two of our scheduled crossing times, we did eventually make the ferry but the journey was not yet over as he took the wrong turning at Ryde for Sandown. However, he did find our hotel in time for our evening meal.

We were blessed with good weather for the weekend's competitions and the good news is that we brought back the trophy for the team melee Plate competition, won by Malcolm White and his team; the runner-up trophy was won by Mike Johnson and his team.

A closing date for the season has not yet been fixed as members want to continue for a bit longer.

Dave and Heather Baber

'The bagpipes were invented by the Irish, who gave them to the Scots as a joke – but they haven't seen the joke yet.'

OR:

'The Welsh invented the bagpipes and gave them to the Irish and the Scots as a joke – but they haven't seen the joke yet.'

Philosophy

'Everlasting peace is a dream, and not even a pleasant one; and war is a necessary part of God's arrangement of the world (Weltordnung). Without war, the world would slide dissolutely into materialism.'

Helmuth von Moltke, December 1880

Faced with these awkward statements, we had all, whatever our particular viewpoint, fixed on the one fact we could get our heads round, Moltke himself.

The Prussian Field-Marshal was eighty years old, and at the end of a long and distinguished military career. Academic and practical, he is still acclaimed as the greatest strategist of the latter half of the 19th century, whose works are still studied in modern military academies.

From there, we went on to spend the afternoon trying to understand what he could mean by 'dream', 'peace' and 'materialism'. With difficulty we felt that perhaps the old warrior was equating 'peace' with 'greed', and so linked it to 'materialism'. We laboured mightily at these key words, and their definitions, and even found that war might have a positive side (new inventions, medical advances etc). The idea that war could be part of God's Weltordnung was hotly contested by a Catholic member of the group.

Having done our best to understand von Moltke's apparently outrageous words, and knowing that previously he had declared 'that war is one of the worst disasters that can afflict human society', we finally agreed that it was impossible to get into the mind of a dead man.

Bula Brazil

Poetry Circle 1

At our October meeting, we went in search of Autumn. Despite a relatively small attendance, there proved to be an interesting, thought-provoking, and sometimes humorous selection of works, from a range of poets chosen by the group.

On this occasion, it was especially interesting to note the wide settings of the poems - ranging from an Ontario farm, through Wales, London suburbs, Cornwall and, of course, Fairford! 'September', by Archibald Lampman, warned of the early onset of Winter in Canada; Dylan Thomas's 'Poem in October' was a dream of Wales, whilst 'Harrow-on-the Hill' was a reminder by John Betjeman that Autumn comes to urban areas as well as the country. A L Rowse, better known as an historian, surprised us with 'November Ploughing' - perhaps implying that Autumn comes later in Cornwall! Finally, Ian revived an earlier struggle with Autumn in 'Poetry Group'.

Ken Miles

'The sound of one of our country pipes, which I had played by one of my sailors, also caused wonderment. Seeing that it was decked out with trappings and ribbons at the head, they concluded that it was a living animal that sang thus in different voices, and were much pleased with it. Perceiving that they were misled, I told them it was an instrument, and placed it deflated in their hands. Whereupon, recognising that it was made by hand, they said that it was a divine instrument, made by God with his own hands, for it sounded so sweetly and in so many different voices. They said they had never heard anything sweeter.'

G.R. Crone (ed. and trans.), *The voyages of Cadamosto and other documents on western Africa in the second half of the fifteenth century*. The Hakluyt Society, 2nd series, lxxx (London, 1937), pp. 50–51

Straddlers

Our preamble for the October walk stated what was on offer, for example lovely views, outstanding Cotswold countryside, gorgeous weather and good company. As it came to being, thirteen souls of mixed gender got exactly that, even the prediction of the weather!

Whilst overnight 40mm of rain had dampened the ground somewhat – apart from the initial start on the old Ryknild Street - Roman Road (track) – most of the walk encountered good footing. Perhaps the climate 2,000 years ago deemed drainage unnecessary to the Romans! However, the distant ordered landscape viewed on either side of the Road was very worth while.

Through a sheep field, woods and downhill – more sheep - we arrived for lunch at Upper Slaughter. As no one owned up to winning the Euro Lottery recently, we ate our sandwiches instead of visiting the only (very expensive) hostelry nearby!

Next the wooded path following the course of the river Eye below, leading to the road and entrance to the incline of Eyford Park. Here it was warm enough to strip off to shirt sleeves!

One felt on top of the world walking along the one-and-a-half mile drive of the Park with its outstanding views of the Cotswolds at its best. The last stretch on metalled roads brought us back to base. Coupled with the autumn effect on the countryside colouring and varied terrain encountered, one could not have asked for anything better!

Bert Sampson

*'When melancholy Autumn comes to Wembley
And electric trains are lighted after tea
The poplars near the stadium are trembly
With their tap and tap and whispering to me,
Like the sound of little breakers
Spreading out along the surf-line
When the estuary's filling
With the sea.'*

From Harrow-on-the-hill by John Betjeman

Table Tennis

The first meeting of this new group was held on 3rd October in the Keble Room of the Community Centre. The room was booked for one hour and this proved sufficient to exercise the dozen or so first members who attended. Equipment had been provided so members could just turn up and play; some did bring their own bats.

The current 11-point game rules were easily adopted and games flowed quickly. There was just time between games to gather one's breath.

Following the success of this first meeting, the Keble Room has now been booked for each Wednesday at 2.30pm through to December. We have booked every Wednesday in the knowledge that members will not be able to come every week, but hopefully will make some of them. As membership grows we can book another slot or extend the current sessions as necessary.

This room costs £6 per hour to hire, with free use of the Community Centre table tennis table. It has been decided to charge members attending £1 per session to cover this cost and the purchase of equipment, such as the net, bats and balls. These arrangements will be reviewed at the end of October, when any adjustments deemed necessary can be made.

Players of all abilities are welcome to join us. Please just turn up on a Wednesday and you will get some games.

Nick Stroude

'To improve, we must enjoy the game and above all have fun.'

<http://www.tabletennisdaily.co.uk>

Timetable of Group Activities

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

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

Please send items for the

December

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

Friday November 23rd