

NEWSLETTER

Buckingham and District



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Number 61



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*Opinions stated within
are not necessarily those of the
editor or trustees*

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Martin Paul

Hello Everyone,

As new chairman of your U3A I must say I am finding the prospect a little daunting. Clive Cowdy will be a hard act to follow but I'm pleased to say he has accepted the role of President so I know he will be on hand should any advice and help be needed! I would like to thank him for his work as chairman on behalf of our U3A.



As for my role as new chairman I hope to continue to promote our U3A in all aspects and I'm sure it will continue to flourish. We have a large and very active U3A with over 850 members and 75 groups as well as monthly 'open meetings' and social events and trips. This as well as shared learning projects such as the 'Stowe' project which Clive has done much to promote.

One bit of urgent business; we have 3 new committee members already settled in but like many previous chair people I find I'm putting out a plea for a secretary and someone to edit the Newsletter. Neither roles are onerous, and I know, that both Rosemary Gadd (outgoing secretary) and Anita Savage (outgoing newsletter editor) would be happy to chat informally about the roles to explain to anyone interested what is involved. I'm sure with such a large and active membership that someone will offer to help!

I hope to see many of you at the Christmas social and at the lunch in the New Year, so I wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

BRIDGE

Bryan Weston Thomas -
Group Coordinator

The club continues to thrive. We meet each Tuesday from 10.00am to midday at Maids Moreton Village Hall, with usually 5 to 8 tables.

Once a month, the club runs an 'Assisted Bridge' event, when players can ask the director how best to play their hands. On other Tuesdays we play competitive duplicate bridge with one more formally as 'Competition Tuesday', where the best five results over the year lead to a winning partnership – and even a (modest) prize! Except for the Assisted Bridge event, the results of play are emailed to players, usually on the same day.

The club would like to attract new members from the U3A Tuition, Beginners and Improvers groups who would like to play (mainly) competitive bridge at a friendly club. It helps to have a regular partner but, if that is not always possible, we will do what we can to find a partner for the session. New members will be very welcome. You can find out more at <http://buckinghamu3a.org.uk/bridge-club/>

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Janti Mistry – Membership Secretary

By now you should have received your membership card. Late subscribers will have theirs emailed, to print at home or to download on to mobile phone/tablet. Those without email and anyone who needs a printed copy, can collect it at open meetings. If you can't come to the meeting, please make other arrangements.



Christmas Social

Wednesday 20th December, 2.00 for 2.30

Please join us for a Victorian Christmas tea

CROQUET

Roger Edwards - Group Coordinator

The clocks have gone back, the nights are drawing in and the grass is damp and long - another croquet season has come to an end. Once again, we've had a successful summer with new members joining the group and, despite the overall dampness of much of the season, only one session was lost to bad weather and as always, we had great fun!

Andy, the groundsman at Buckingham Cricket Club, did us proud once again, with a beautifully prepared outfield available to us every week. It may not be as level as a 'proper' croquet green, but the slopes, bumps and occasional worm casts do make for some very interesting challenges! Although the season proper starts after the clocks go forward, we had a pre-season get-together in February, at which tea and cakes were consumed in reasonable quantities.

Later, we had a mid-season picnic and, as can be seen from the picture below, the weather was once again kind to us and a great time was had by all - and a great deal of cake was once again consumed (as well as sandwiches, biscuits, sausage rolls etc etc).

As well as the normal Friday afternoon sessions we had a

couple of matches against players from Winslow and Preston Bissett. While we might not have won those matches, the friendliness and general croquet camaraderie (and tea and cake) were excellent and we continue to benefit from playing against better players.

Now it could be construed from the above paragraphs that all we do is eat cake and drink tea, but nothing could be further from the truth. Here you can see the



group concentrating hard as they employ the skills learned at early season coaching sessions. Each week we played three games and each one was hard

fought with some average shots, some brilliant shots, some crafty shots and some downright vicious shots. Oh yes, croquet can be a brutal game. But it's an easy game to pick up with few and (mostly) quite simple rules. It's a game that is easy to play - but not so easy to play well. However, whatever their level of skill, it is fair to say that every single member of the group enjoys their Friday afternoon games.

The 2018 season will start on Friday April 6, at 2.00pm, at Buckingham Town Cricket Club. There is room in the group for new members to join, so if anybody fancies having a go, please let me know. You do not need any kit (the U3A can supply that), or any special skill. You just need to be ready to enjoy yourself in the open air on a lovely site with a very friendly group of fellow U3A members. And - the sun always shines on croquet (we don't play in the rain)!



CREATIVE WRITERS

Susie Kelly - Group Coordinator

Each year the writing group produces an anthology of our favourite stories written during our alternate Monday meetings throughout the year. We also arrange a workshop with a published author or writing coach.

This year we invited Judith Allnatt to spend a day with us again. We have had her twice before and also attended workshops she's held elsewhere, so we feel she has become a friend.

Coincidentally, she was on the programme of speakers at the summer Literary Festival held in Buckingham, so we were able to meet her again. The day she spent with us was October 16 at the Council Chamber, where we normally meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month.

The programme she had planned for us was aimed at giving structure to our short stories.

First of all she asked us to name every sort of room we might find in a house. Then to name all sorts of objects which might be found outside, anything from a pillar box to a wheel barrow. We then had to choose one item from each list and try to imagine what this object from the outside would look like inside one of the rooms and what effect it would have on the room. Then who would find this strange object in their room and so on until we could write a complete story.

We found this a brilliant exercise for our imaginations. Judith's style of coaching has evolved since we first met her about 10 years ago and we can honestly say she is an excellent teacher. It was a thoroughly good day.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR and SECRETARY REQUIRED!

If interested, please contact the new committee.

LINE DANCING

Gina Crouch - Group Coordinator

The first line dancing group started in January 2016 and is now a well established group with around 25-30 attending each session, on the first and third Monday afternoons, in Buckingham Youth Centre. I think we are now good enough to call ourselves Improvers! The sessions are great fun and we do a variety of dances. This group is not suitable for those who have never line danced before; however if you have done some line dancing do come along and see what you think!

In July a new group aimed at complete beginners started. It has got off to a good start and from February will be held twice a month on the first and third Wednesday afternoons, also at Buckingham Youth Centre. If you've always fancied giving line dancing a go do come along and give it a try. New members are always welcome - both male and female!



SQUARE DANCING

Susie Kelly - Group Coordinator

Buckingham Square Dancers were very privileged to have been accepted as part of the Buckingham Town Twinning Association in order that we could arrange a friendly exchange with dancers from our Friendship Town in Germany, Neukirchen-Vluyn. Having found this town on the map we then searched around it and found a club called the Broom Bears who were happy to try out this arrangement. The club is so named because when they started they only had 7 dancers (we need 8 to make a square) so a broom was used as a rather stiff and inanimate dancer until they managed to recruit more dancers.

The German group travelled from Dusseldorf to Birmingham on Saturday 30th September, six being 'normal' people and two were our square dancers. They hired a people carrier for the four days of their visit. Upon their arrival they were treated to lunch with Mr and Mrs Watkins and from there hosts came to take them to their 'homes' for their stay. Valerie and Geoff Shaw very kindly looked after our two dancers. On the Saturday afternoon Sue Watkins led the group on a walk around the town and in the evening 26 of us were treated to a wonderful meal in the home of Mr and Mrs Scrase, of Market Hill.

Some went to church on Sunday morning and in the afternoon a Square Dance took place at Talcott Village Hall. Tea and cakes as well as dancing was enjoyed by everyone. Monday found the people carrier plus outriders driving to Oxford for the morning and then on to Blenheim Palace for the afternoon. Disregarding their aching feet after their day of sight-seeing we took the two dancers to Hemel Hempstead to yet another Square Dance. We got them home by midnight, just, and then it was time to wave them farewell back to Germany.

The intention now is for the German Club to visit Buckingham again next year so that we can show them different places to dance in this area and get to know better our new German Friends.

CHARITY FUND RAISING

Dusty Rodes - Project Street Life

Fundraising for Project Street Life continues, slowly but surely. The produce stall in September did quite well and the ukulele group went busking and raised over £30 - thanks for that folks! So another £221 has been sent to the project. We still have the Christmas quiz and raffle to go and the recorder group are going to play outside the community centre again this year. The full results will appear in the next newsletter and on the website, which will include all the contributions from the Christmas activities.

So far this year we've raised over £500 and I'm hopeful we'll reach around £700 by the end of the year.



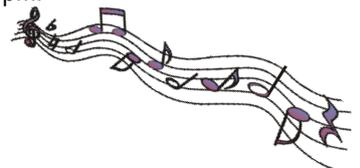
As I stated in the last newsletter, I've been coordinating the charity fundraising now for the last 6 years and would quite like a break for a year or so. Any willing volunteers out there prepared to take over? It's a rewarding job and I'll happily talk to any of you at one of the open meetings and run through what's required.

MIXED INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Tina Mitchell - Group Coordinator

Ten players attended our first meeting on 1 November. We played some carols and popular Christmas songs, with which we hope to entertain folk attending the Christmas lunch on 20 December. We have a decent spread of parts, although it would be good to have another bass player or two. We have strings, woodwind and brass, with a potential percussion section. Our skills range from 'having started learning an instrument for the first time a couple of years ago' to

intermediate; more experienced players are able to help those with less experience. We hope to play a wide range of music over the year including folk, classical and popular tunes. If you have started playing an instrument recently and would like to play with a group, or if you would like to dust off that instrument you used to play when you were at school, then come along and join us at Maids Moreton Church on the 2, 4 and 5 Wednesday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm.



NEW MEMBERS

Ginny Booth - New Members Liaison

A successful new members coffee morning was held in September, with over 30 people attending. After coffee our Chairman, Clive Cowdy, gave a brief history of the U3A, followed by a talk by our Group Liaison Officer, Lilia Bogle, who spoke about the many groups we have in the Buckingham U3A. It was then the turn of the new members to speak about their interests, hobbies etc. Suggestions were also made as to new groups.

TUESDAY GARDENING

Vee Sampson - Group Coordinator

We have reached the end of another gardening year and can now look forward to sitting in our armchairs and viewing the garden from the warmth of the house, whilst planning what new project we can start in the spring.

In September we had another successful plant identification session. It always amazes me how knowledgeable our members are but I think we all learned something from the specimens spread out on the tables before us. The group visited Preston Bissett Nurseries in October, for a talk on 'Autumn Colour'. Always entertaining, Peter Richardson gave a very interesting talk and the temptation to buy plants from the nursery at the end couldn't be resisted by most. It was a disappointment when our arranged speaker couldn't come to the November meeting but we managed to hastily put together a video viewing of National Trust Gardens, which included some good tips from the professional gardeners. I am grateful to John White for his patience and persistence in getting the stubborn technical equipment up and running to enable the presentation.

It just remains for me to say on behalf of everyone in the Tuesday garden group 'Happy Christmas and good gardening in the year ahead.'



BUCKINGHAM and DISTRICT U3A COMMITTEE and OFFICERS

Chairman	Martin Paul	01296 713204 chairman@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Vice-Chairman	Mike Weston	vice.chairman@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
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Treasurer	Paddy Collins	01280 823006 treasurer@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Secretary	<i>Position vacant</i>	secretary@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Janti Mistry/Lorna Joy	01280 700583/01280 860313 membership.secretary@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Group Liaison	Lilia Bogle	01280 812622 group.liason.officer@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Webmaster	Derek Morgan	07776 295532 webmaster@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
Publicity	Dusty Roades	publicity@buckinghamu3a.org.uk
New Member Liaison	Ginny Booth	01280 813802 new.member.liason@buckinghamu3a.org

DIGITAL CAMERAS

Peter Cammas - Group Coordinator

A rather mixed up year and I thank the group members for their forbearance with me causing all the unexpected disruption.

We still managed to produce some very good photographs, which will be displayed at the AGM and the standard of our results has increased very well.

The highlight of the year came with a visit to Buckingham Fire Station where we were royally treated and various fire safety procedures explained. They allowed pictures to be taken and we saw and took pictures of the formidable amount of equipment at their disposal. A real eye opener; we must all be thankful for having these brave and very competent people on hand, just for us in an emergency. Hopefully next year will be more settled and we have some interesting trips planned.

New members are always welcome - cameras, mobiles and pads are now all in use, so no excuses. We're a friendly bunch of enthusiasts, so come along and see what it's all about.



THEATRE OUTINGS

Di Procter - Group Coordinator

There have been fewer visits during the summer; however a large group went to see La Cage aux Folles in August. I had seen it on the opening night in Oxford and loved it, but some said it was a bit long. In September a select few grasped the opportunity to go to see 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' which I believe was as good as ever. Very recently some of us went to English National Ballet's double bill of 'Song of the Earth' and La Sylphide. For the first the stage was very stark. There were also two wonderful solo singers accompanying each dance, so most unusual and some wonderful choreography. The more traditional La Sylphide followed this. Both these ballets were staged as a tribute to Kenneth Macmillan, the choreographer, to mark 25 years since his death. Once again the ENB did not disappoint.

My experiment of offering opera tickets was well received and a group are going to see Mozart's Cose Fan Tutte at the end of the month. Also in November another group went to see Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sunset Boulevard.

Below are the shows, which will still be booking in December, and some more recent reservations.

New shows booking for 2018

The Play that Goes Wrong - If you want a laugh this is the play for you, as everything that can go wrong does!

Wednesday 25 April, 2.30pm, front stalls £24.50, pay by 1 January.

An Officer and a Gentleman - A new musical, which is based on the story of the film which starred Richard Gere. (Cast to be announced shortly) Wednesday 11 July 11, 2.30pm, front circle £33.50, pay by 1 February.

Shows still booking which will go ahead

Cinderella - Matthew Bourne's latest ballet. Thursday 15 February, 2.30pm, £30.00, pay by 10 January.

The Little Mermaid - This is the next Northern Ballet production. Thursday 19 April, 2.30pm, front circle £17.00, pay by 10 January.

The Case of the Frightened Lady - An Edgar Wallace thriller. Tuesday 22 May 22, 7.30pm, front stalls £25.50, pay by 10 January.

Matilda - A modern musical about an exceptional young girl, based on the Roald Dahl story, with music by Tim Minchin. Wednesday 30 June, 2.30pm, front circle £35.00, pay by 1 January.

War Horse - A wonderful opportunity to see this very moving theatrical production of Michael Morpurgo's book, with puppeteers working the animals. Not to be missed. Wednesday 3 October, 2.30pm, £30.00 in the stalls, circle and upper circle. Please state a preference. Pay by 1 February.

HANDBELLS

Rodney Bennett - Group Coordinator

Christmas is fast approaching and as in previous years, we are rehearsing carols to be played at local schools and clubs.

Throughout this year our membership has remained steady but we would be delighted to welcome more people to come and join us - it's great fun!

In the new year we will start rehearsing for the next 'bellfest', so music has to be chosen and converted to bell notation. This year the theme is to reflect 'numbers' in song titles etc., so if you have any suggestions please let us know, or better still, bring them along on Friday mornings and join us.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Derek Morgan

The Data Protection Act is changing and from May 2018 will be replaced by the General Data Protection Act - as a result we have been reviewing our procedures, as the revision in the law has the effect of tightening up the regulations. This was explained in some detail at the recent AGM and a full explanation is available on the web site and on the U3A national website, which we recommend you read.

As a reminder to all members; do not share other members email addresses, except with their explicit permission.

Group coordinators should always distribute emails using the blind copy option (BCC) unless they have permission from those on the email list to share the information.

LOCAL HISTORY 2

Jean Churchill-Coleman - Group Coordinator

2017 has been a busy year, with two meetings a month for our group. Numbers have been high for meetings, with the mezzanine room full for most of the talks, although fewer members joined the visits, meaning that on some occasions we've had to make changes to the programme. For example, a few weeks ago, we were given a wonderfully warm welcome and interesting talk by the Business Manager at the New Inn, Stowe, having had to make last minute arrangements to visit. The visit was finished off with coffee and cakes in the restaurant. Earlier in the year we also had a talk about Stowe and other National Trust properties in the Home Counties but this time it was given by the National Trust Archaeologist who described the work the trust undertakes to excavate and restore their properties back to their former condition.

Not to be outdone by Stowe we have also had inspiring talks by archivists from both Woburn Abbey and Waddesdon Manor, telling us about the histories of the families who created them and the building and development of the estates. We had a further talk on the Rothschild family and Waddesdon Manor on the anniversary of the signing of the Balfour Treaty, which demonstrates how interlinked local history is to national and international events. Other talks have covered both local and general historical topics; we learnt about life in Georgian times and Winslow in the 19th century, as well as Silverstone Racing Circuit, what being an auctioneer involves and the intriguing story of the life of Dr Barry, who spent her entire working life as an army doctor disguised as a man. We also heard about the campaign for justice for a Brackley teenager, Anna Reynolds, accused of murdering her mother. Our talks have been very eclectic!

As for the visits we made, we started closer to home with a



guided tour of St Laurence Church, Winslow, where we were given a demonstration of the range and power of their church organ. We

also visited Banbury, the Higgins Museum in Bedford and the Oxford Town Hall and Museum (see photo), which is well worth a tour if you are in Oxford. We will finish our 2017 programme with a Christmas group social and then be ready to begin the New Year with a talk on the Kit Kat Club.

RAILWAY

Geoff Sampson - Group Coordinator

The group continues to meet in the library meeting room for indoor meetings, where we watch and discuss various DVD clips. All very interesting for us steam enthusiasts and they usually provoke lively conversation.

In June we had a visit to the Leighton Buzzard Light



Railway who made us very welcome, even adorning the train with our name. Despite it being one of the hottest days of the year it was a most enjoyable visit, incorporating a ride

and look around the work sheds.

In July we again had an outdoor visit, this time to the Pimlico Garden Railway; a miniature railway in a garden setting and members had the opportunity to drive steam and diesel trains. The afternoon was much enjoyed by all and as the pictures suggest - a return to boyhood!

Our meeting in September was lunch at The Stratton Arms in Turweston. The landlord shared his



very interesting photos of times gone by, when the steam railway ran through and around Brackley.

In October we remembered and paid tribute to, train aficionado David Shepherd, following his recent death.

We then enjoyed a viewing and discussion of The Grand Old Men of Steam.

In November we welcomed 3 new members. We discussed the 2018 programme and then looked at members own video footage and pictures. One interesting one showed the Brackley to Buckingham line, with pictures of the line just before it closed. Also clearly shown was Buckingham station.

Extra to the programme, several members had the opportunity to enjoy a visit to the model railway exhibition held at the car museum, Gaydon and a couple of us had a very pleasant day out on the East Lancs Railway, riding behind 60009 Union of South Africa.

Our final meeting of the year will be Christmas lunch at The Stratton Arms.

We welcome new members, so do come and join us.

LOCAL HISTORY 3

Jane Abeltino - Group Coordinator

In July we had a talk on the WW2 listening stations in our area and also sadly said goodbye to our co-ordinator Ruth Roy, who has moved away from this area.



Our last outing of the summer was a most enjoyable trip to the Royal Hospital Chelsea, thanks to the Winslow community bus. It was a glorious day and having being shown around by our amusing and informative guide, Dave Thomson (poet and raconteur), we then had time for some lunch there and a walk around their beautiful and extensive grounds.

At our first meeting of the autumn, Susan Fern gave us an interesting talk on Viking and Saxon history in Buckingham. We then had a follow-up trip to

Haddenham, this time the other end of the village, taking in the museum. Our next meeting was a fascinating talk on the origins and duties of the Home Guard during WW2. Four members of the Oxon and Bucks Group turned up, along with many arms and munitions, managing to give us a demonstration of their drills as well.



AGM REPORT

From minutes taken by Rosemary Gadd - Outgoing Secretary

Clive Cowdy, as outgoing Chairman, gave his report on the year. He stated that our most important asset is our groups and their coordinators (some who run more than one group), praising their efforts, hard work and enthusiasm. He thanked all who help to make the U3A run smoothly, including the outgoing committee.

The Treasurer's report (given by Paddy Collins) was followed by the election of new officers; Chairman - Martin Paul, Vice Chairman - Mike Weston and Treasurer - Paddy Collins, at this point we do not have a Secretary. The following committee members were also voted in, Lilia Bogle, Derek Morgan, Janti Mistry, Dusty Roades, Linda Beazley and Lorna Joy (see page 5).

Derek Morgan spoke about changes to the Data Protection Act (see page 6).

The floor was then handed over to our new Chairman, Martin Paul. Martin began with a vote of thanks to Clive, the outgoing chairman. This was followed by a proposed increase in our annual subscription from £10 to £15, to start next year (2018). This was proposed, seconded and accepted by a show of hands. It was then proposed that Buckingham U3A proceed with setting up a new CIO charity (using same trustees, objectives and comparable constitution as currently) and closing the existing one once the new one is up and running. This was also proposed, seconded and accepted on a show of hands.

We then had the election of a President, an honorary role. The committee had proposed Clive Cowdy, which was accepted and carried on a show of hands.

Our outgoing charity, Project Street Life has been championed by Dusty Roades. There were two proposals for 2018; Willen Hospice and Friends of Buckingham Hospital, the latter being voted in.

The final part of the AGM was given over to a Members' Forum. A proposal was put forward to use only fairtraded products for teas at our open meetings. This was also accepted on a show of hands.

A call was put out for more members to join the shrinking Latin group.

Martin declared the meeting closed at 3.15pm.

Full reports on the above are available on the website and a set of accounts for the year will be sent out with this newsletter.

