

Newsletter May 2018



From the Chair

Dear Members.

I greet you from the warmth of my kitchen it's wet cold and windy. Phil is away on his holiday starting in Texas moving on to Sunny California though he has just informed me that the rain has followed him to Texas and isn't about to change.

We have had a turbulent year so far our U3A facing an uncertain future as far as the Pemberton Centre is concerned but we are very happy to stay put for as long as we can.

Looking back at Phil's last letter it would appear we are obsessed by the weather a very British topic me thinks.

Administratively we have much to contend with, the Data Protection and new Charity regulations coming into force will force a change in our constitution. GDPR (The General Data Protection Regulation) comes into force on the 25th May 2018 and on a separate note we will inform you of how U3A handle your data.

Can I please make an impassioned plea for more of you to get involved with your U3A. We will, later this year need more help on the committee as people come to the end of their time. Some committee members will take on new tasks leaving a couple of posts vacant. I'm asking in plenty of time so please think about it. Bye for now. Angela Mason, (Vice Chair)

Notices

GDPR General Data Protection Regulation.

Comes into force 25th May 2018.

The membership data for members of Higham and Rushden U3A is held on a secured server (Beacon) organised by the Third Age Trust.

The information we hold on our members is the information you gave us when you joined or last renewed.

The administration of the system is accessible to selected members of the committee, our Beacon administrator and group leaders.

Access to allow members to change their own held details i.e. address, email etc. is via the Higham and Rushden website with a personal "log in"

Members data is only accessible by carefully selected authorisations to allow the administration of H&R U3A to provide the best possible service for their members.

Third party sharing of information i.e. TAM (Third Age Matters) and Gift Aid (HMRC) is required and in turn are covered by the regulations under your membership. End of statement.

Settlements A



At our April meeting a team of 4 from the group gave a very informative presentation on the ancient villages of Twywell and Slipton. This demonstrated how well each person's

expertise could be used to give an interesting talk thus spreading the load. For such a small settlement the area had a surprising amount of history. As Wendy grew up in the village she was able to talk from personal experience filling in details that were unique. Margaret H. used her talents with a camera to organise the photographs while Janet and Roy did much of the historical research on which they based their talk.

Twywell is named after the two village wells which still exist today. The nearby Twywell Hills and Dales Country Park, a former ironstone works, is a popular area for walks and family days out. Mining in the area ceased in the 1980's.

Horace Waller the anti-slavery activist and friend of General Gordon was rector of St Nicholas Church in Twywell from 1874 to 1895.

Despite its small population, only 176 in 2011, the villages have two pubs including The Old Friar which is a popular dining venue.

Our May meeting will be the last indoor meeting before we begin our visits to some of the settlements we have found out about since October. The talk in May will be on a very different settlement – the large village of Weedon Bec.

Frances Francis



BookMarks

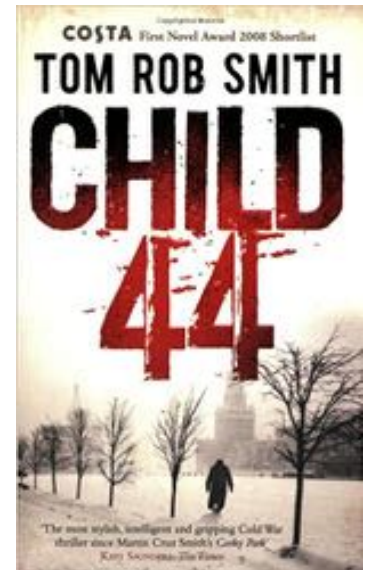
Chosen and reviewed by Dominica Jones



Although suggesting a 'misery memoir', this first novel by Tom Robb Smith turned out to be an efficient thriller set in and around Moscow in 1953, the year Stalin died. The hero is Leo, a senior officer in the secret police, charged with rooting out anyone who might threaten the

precarious reputation of the Soviet Union.

When the body of a young boy is found on railway line, his father suspects murder rather than a tragic accident. Leo dismisses this claim because in communist Russia that this sort of crime is deemed not to exist. Meanwhile, a ruthless rival causes Leo's reduction to the lowest rank of the militia and his exile with his wife to an isolated town. There, two more bodies of young boys with the same mutilations are found along the railway lines. Undercover investigations discover that the first boy was the forty fourth victim. By now, Leo had undergone a Damascene conversion and is determined to make amends for his past by finding the killer.



I thoroughly enjoyed this book, but my feelings weren't shared by some of the group. They were put off by the first harrowing chapter describing the desperation of starving children in the Ukraine. These pages were not an easy read, but were important to the ending of the story. Those that did read the book agreed it had a good plot, was well researched, with some memorable details and characters. Leo has now appeared in two other books, and in the film he was portrayed by Tom Hardy – always worth a look!

Next month, quite a change! We will be reading 'When God was a Rabbit' by Sarah Winman. This is a book about childhood, growing up, friendships and families, triumph and tragedy and everything in between. Dominica Jones

Ten Pin Bowling



The group had their annual lunch get-together at The Carriage House on Friday 4th May. This was the time when various individuals were presented with certificates and 'trophies' for their (not always) excellent scores over the year. Many of the group had managed a Personal Best and I felt that they should at least receive a medal. It would not be correct for me to name all of these individuals as the status might go to their heads! However, perhaps I can mention Angela Cows for her amazing (NOT!) 78 and 66 scores - not quite the wooden spoon and Richard Wilmott for an excellent 193 (thankfully the organiser's score is still safe). Congratulations to everyone as they all deserve praising; though most will know this is difficult for me to say! Alan Devenish

Days Out Car Share Trips 2018.



Christmas trip.16/11/18.

Coach Trip to National Trust property Waddesdon Manor Aylesbury HP18 0JH

There is a Christmas market with places for 50 stalls. The manor will be seasonally dressed. Coach price to be confirmed. No more than £13. N.T. members £5 yes we have to pay too! Non N.T. £18 group rate. The list is open.

Past trip reports

Wimpole Hall. It was a lovely day. Everyone seemed to see all they wanted too. The lambs and Shire horses were very popular.

The Vicar of Dibley 4 of us enjoyed the play. Light and funny. Stantonbury is a good venue and easy to get to at Milton Keynes.

Twinwood Airfield Museum. Well we had a lovely day Perfect weather. So much more than Glen Miller. The NAAFI was an added bonus for such a small venue. The best £5 we have spent in a long time!

All car-share trips unless stated otherwise.

Mon 2/7/18 Wrest Park MK45 4HR Free entrance to English Heritage members.£10 90p Non members. Optional Archaeological store £3 including E.H. members. pre with us please for tour essential.

Mon 30/7/18 Apethorpe Palace PE8 5AQ. 2 places available. £7.65 entrance [including E.H. members] with guided tour. Please be aware there are no loos at the property.

Sunday Lunch

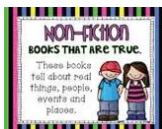


27/5/18 12.30 for 1pm.at The Priory Wellingborough NN8 2LF.

The Priory has lots of choices apart from a carvery. Check their website for details. Pre book with us essential.

Recommendations for venues please.

Non Fiction Book Group



Next Meeting, 4th June 2-4pm at leaders home. New members welcome.

Are you a non-Fiction reader? Are you interested in Travel, History, Biographies etc. The group will meet every month or 2 months for a long book at the Group Leaders home on Monday afternoons . Members would need to commit to buying the books we will be reading on Kindle or online.

Our current book is. Orkney's Italian Chapel was built by Italian POWs held on the island during the Second World War. In the sixty-five years since it was built it has become an enduring symbol of peace and hope around the world. The story of who built the chapel and how it came into existence and survived against all the odds is both fascinating and inspiring. Author Philip Paris' extensive research into the creation of the Italian Chapel has uncovered many new facts, and this comprehensive new book is the definitive account of the chapel and those who built it. It is a book that has waited to be written for sixty-five years. We will be at the May meeting

Family History



Family history is based around births, marriages and deaths, and it has to be said that it often the deaths that give most insight into the lives of our ancestors - sometimes dramatic and the subject of lengthy newspaper reports, sometimes a window on the the social conditions of the times, sometimes part of our broader history.

In April Frances Francis gave an engrossing talk about Coroners' records, which demonstrated how official and unofficial sources can work together to give the big picture. She told us about a suicide discovered through a death certificate and, in the absence of a surviving coroner's report, through the newspapers in neighbouring counties. She then showed how, in the case of a bicycle accident in 1940, perseverance resulted in the early release of a Coroner's report with a treasury of information including the drawings of the scene made by the policeman, witness reports and even post mortem details. With all this evidence, the group got rather distracted discussing the rights and wrongs of the eventual verdict (no blame for the motorist involved)!

The next meeting will look at the way family historians can discover all sorts of fascinating information on free websites and find a whole afternoon has gone by with the original quest totally forgotten. Then in June we will be helping each other to break down the brick walls we should have been working on when all that other data distracted us! Sharon Stafford

Wine Appreciation March



Excellent tasting last month two Chenin Blanc One Vouvray from the Loire in France La Forcine 2015 and one Hazy View from South Africa. Interesting differences and similarities would

highly recommend both.

Also looked at Units and how many there are in a bottle which leads to an awareness of how much you are drinking (included picture shows one unit in different types of glasses.)

The size of a unit depends on the alcohol strength e.g. the Vouvray is 11.5%.



Wine Appreciation April

Tasted two Pinot Noirs this month neither of which were impressive. One was from New Zealand Yealands Estate Land Made 2016 and the other from Germany where Pinot Noir is known as Spatburgunder . The German one we drank was Opfinger Spatburgunder Kabinett 2015 this had more flavour .

Not sure whether our tastes are changing because we are older but wines we used to enjoy now taste a bit flat. They definitely have got to have a bit of oomph to them (and not just the alcohol).

We still have a couple of spaces on Tuesday if anyone is interested.

Regards Steve Evans

Knit & Natter



If you wish to join our friendly little group we still have room for one more person. Please contact the group leader, Kathy Arnold if you are interested. We meet once a fortnight on Monday mornings, 10am until 12, at the group leaders home. We all do our own projects as well as knitting for charity. Here is a knitted cactus that I have just finished. Kathy Arnold



Settlements B



This was the last of our meetings at Rushden Hall for the Summer. Frances Francis gave us a very interesting talk about Milton Ernest.

There was geographical content and a lot of information regarding how the population of the village had varied over the years including an item about a mother and daughter who had been

accused of being witches and the punishment they suffered!

It is going to be our first summer visit next month. It is - a drive yourself and visit what you would like to see - type of visit.



We are meeting at the Garden Centre on Wednesday 13th June where I am hoping to have maps and then it is up to our members where they want to go. It is quite suitable for those who can't walk too well, as the cars can be taken nearer to the church. Again it is up to members whether they want to end their visit at the Garden Centre where apparently there is a Post Office, some craft work items in addition to the Coffee Shop All we want is a nice Spring/Summer day to wander through the village. Chris

Driving



Can anybody help we have a member who would like some help on towing and parking caravans.

Summer is here finally so are you prepared for long journeys down to the Devon coast?? Or Skegness!!!

Regards Steve Evans

History



Chatsworth House

We were fortunate that the weather had improved for our trip to Chatsworth House, set in the unspoiled countryside of Derbyshire and home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire.

Chatsworth has been owned by the same (Cavendish) family since the 16th Century starting with the 1st Earl of Devonshire, William Cavendish, son of Elizabeth Talbot (known as Bess of Hardwick) and her second husband William Cavendish through to the present day 12th Duke of Devonshire, Peregrine Cavendish.



I, along with many people, have seen programmes about, or pictures of, Chatsworth or viewed the most recent 'Pride and Prejudice' filmed there. Even so, I was surprised by the sheer size of both the house and gardens. The £32million refurbishment programme, which includes restoration of stonework, statues, paintings, tapestries and water features is almost complete. We were able to see beautiful gilding on the impressive gates, on statuary and around the windows, and cleaned and restored artworks inside the house.

It was the 4th Earl of Devonshire who became the 1st Duke in 1694, ennobled as a reward for helping William of Orange to gain the English throne. He went to great lengths (and expense) to prepare the house for the monarch to come and stay. This visit never materialised (not until 1913 with a visit by George V and Queen Mary) but the suite of rooms retains several original drapes and fittings. He was responsible for reconstructing the east Front which included the Painted Hall (a main focus for any visitor) and Long Gallery.

The 2nd and 3rd Dukes made no changes but the 4th Duke wanted the approach to the house moved to the west. This involved demolishing stables and offices as well as the village of Edensor so they could not be seen from the house.

Lancelot "Capability" Brown was brought in to redesign the gardens. The 4th Duke's marriage in 1748 to Lady Charlotte Boyle added wealth and properties to his estate including Chiswick House.



The 6th Duke (known as the 'Bachelor Duke') was a great collector, especially of sculpture and books, and spent a great deal at auctions. He repurposed several rooms at Chatsworth to house his growing collections. In 1826 he employed Joseph Paxton, (who was later to design the Crystal Palace) aged 23, as his gardener. Paxton remains the single greatest influence on the gardens including creating/developing The Rockeries and The Strid, The

Arboretum and Pinetum, The Azalea Dell and The Ravine, The Emperor Fountain, The Conservative Wall. He also remodelled the village of Edensor. By 1908 the Devonshire family were in financial straits. The extravagance of the 6th Duke, failed business ventures of the 7th Duke and agricultural depression of the 1870s left the estate with £500,000 of death duties when the 8th Duke died. Valuable books and property from other estates were sold and drastic cuts made to staffing. Later the family moved out and the house deteriorated during WWII when girls and staff from a local college were tenants. The highlights of the visit for me were viewing the sketches in the sketch galleries, walking through the Sculpture Room which I recognised from the 'Pride and Prejudice' film and seeing the beautiful prize-winning camellias in the 'Duke's Greenhouses'.

It was impossible to see all the various garden areas and features – maybe another trip will be necessary! Thank you, Ron, for another excellent trip.
Jessica Walker

Bird Watching



Spring had definitely arrived for our May meeting at Little Paxton Pits and by late morning most of us felt we had put on one layer of clothing too many. Formed by old gravel workings along the river Great Ouse the pits, in birdwatching are particularly known for two things – being the first inland nesting site for cormorants and attracting a number of nightingales in summer. Looking over the first pit we quickly saw cormorants along with heron and a number of other water birds plus common tern.

Cormorant have a characteristic of holding their wings out after fishing, probably to dry but the real reason is uncertain. There were lots of warblers heard in the bushes but it was only a willow warbler that showed well singing from the top of a tree. When I first visited this reserve about ten years ago there were a dozen or so singing nightingales, sadly numbers have declined year on year and this spring only a couple were present. We went to the spot where they had been heard but unfortunately they didn't sing while we were there. Other notable birds seen were buzzard, red kite, sparrow hawk and some of the group had brief views of a kingfisher. The only pub in Little Paxton is the Anchor which doesn't do food on Monday or Tuesday but we found the nearby Barley Mow on the edge of St Neots suited us well with a good range of bar food and larger meals.
Chris Ebden



Gardening



On Thursday 26 members of the Garden Group visited The Old Rectory at Quinton, the first of our summer visits. The weather was kind to us – some sunshine and no rain. It is a 3 acre garden divided into six parts – a kitchen garden, glasshouse and flower garden, a pleasure garden and an orchard. There are also formal structures, long walks and many seating areas. The garden opened privately for us but there are NGS open days on May 20 and September 2 for anyone who wishes to revisit. The late spring has affected some of the planting and there was not as much colour as there should be at this time of year however there was plenty to see and the photographers among us seemed happy. Everyone enjoyed the visit and we now look forward to our coach trip to Warwick in June. Carole

Country Park Walks



SUNDAY 10 JUNE our walk will be at EMBERTON COUNTRY PARK, OLNEY, MK46 5FJ, the paths are hard standing and there are no hills or stiles. We will meet at 10.30am in Olney market square car park which has free parking on a Sunday and then walk along the road to enter the park by the bridge over the river Ouse. If preferred, you can drive into the park (there is a cafe and toilets) and the car parking charge is £4, then meet us on the bridge for the start of the walk. The circular walk from market square car park, through the country park and back to the market square is 2.5 miles. There is a shorter walk through the park if 2.5 miles is too far for any of the members. For those who like to lunch after the walk, it will be at The Green Man pub, Olney Road, Lavendon MK46 4HA, we have lunched there before and the service and food is very good. New Members are very welcome. Please let me know if you are staying on to lunch after the walk so that I can book a table in advance. Car lifts can be arranged from the Duck Street car park in Rushden. New members are very welcome



Committee List

Chairman	Phil Grace
Deputy Chair	Angela Mason
Secretary	Denise Evans
Treasurer	Jean Mole
Membership Secretary	Jessica Walker
Speaker Secretary	Pat Bird, Joanna Read-Thurner
Groups Coordinator	Lynn Gale
Publicity	Peter Wright
Newsletter	Peter Turner
Webmaster	Jim Morrison
Beacon Project Manager	Alan Nixon

U3A Monthly Meetings **Speakers for 2018**

If you or a friend have had experience of speakers at other groups that you think could be of interest to our U3A then please contact our Speaker Secretary

Note:- The Speakers may be subject to change

Speakers for 2018

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| May 16 th | Pemberton
Forensic Podiatry More than a talk about feet.
Mike travels often to America as he is an expert
in his field. | Prof Mike Curran |
| Jun 20 th | Life in War Torn Middle East.
Philip is a published author of several novels where
he has drawn upon his experience whilst working
along troops and others in Iraq and other places. | Philip Caine |
| Jul 18 th | Hunters of the sky. A wonderful audio visual
experience with breathtaking photography
about birds of prey. | Jennifer Anderson |
| Aug 15 th | From Leeches to Laxatives | Tricia Thompson |
| Sep 19 th | The Little Book Of Monarchs
A wonderful fascinating amusing and accurate
guide to English Monarchs. | Tony Boullemeir |
| Oct 17 th | Topic TBA | Leigh Bishop |
| Nov 21 st | A photography special | Tom Way |
| Dec 12 th | The complete history of Christmas.
A colleague of Lesley who you may remember as
Nell Gwynn so expect something a little different. | Mike Kennedy |