

Newsletter September 2017



Peace at last – see History Group

From the Chair,



The whispering grass

Some of you will have heard my plea at last month's Pemberton meeting.

Your Committee tries its best – but we are not perfect. And we are not mind-readers! We have made lots of changes of late and it seems as if there are whispers, rumours, concerns and questions. If there is something you don't like, don't understand or want clarified then please, please, please speak to a Committee member, speak to me, drop us an email.

We will accept unsigned letters or you could use the contact form on the website. Our webmaster, Jim, (who is not on the Committee), will redact your return email address so the mail will be anonymous.

We can't address issues/problems unless you tell us, loudly and clearly.
Phil Grace Chairman

Notices

Lost and Found

A ladies cardigan was left at the August meeting at the Pemberton Centre. I will take it to the September meeting. Margaret Shelton



The British Red Cross are offering our U3A free first aid sessions for older people. 2 sessions can be booked to cover all 14 topics and there is no cost to groups. The sessions aim to build confidence and willingness to help in an emergency using everyday items to cope with injuries and medical conditions. The sessions are short (up to 2 hours) and can cater for up to 15 people in each session. More information contact Angela Mason.

U3A National Conference and AGM Nottingham 29 August to 31 August,



Two members of Higham and Rushden attended this Conference, the only ones from Northamptonshire. 350 members from across the country attended. It was very well organised with good accommodation and a full Agenda. If U3A continues to grow we have over 400,000 members and over 1,000 groups this centre will be too small, they were bursting at the seams.

There were 15 workshops available e.g., Group Coordinators, Learning on line, Accessibility and inclusivity in our U3A, International Third Age Movement amongst others. These were all oversubscribed so the rooms were very full.

There were two speakers, one who spoke on Weird Science which was very entertaining as he spent his professional life debunking all manner of paranormal activities. The other speaker was concerning Gruesome governance because U3a is a charitable organisation we are obligated to follow their guidelines, as much for our protection as theirs. Interesting but a bit dry.

The highlight of the whole event was the Guitar Group from West Bridgford on the first night, they were fantastic, all 60 – 70 music which we sang along to or even danced. The second night was a Ukulele jam session.

The AGM itself was a typical and necessary agenda nothing to be honest of great interest but is a requirement of the set up for running of the University of the Third Age. Some perceptive questions were asked of the Treasurer.
Denise Evans

New Group

Sunday lunch group.



Our first venue as an independent group is on Oct 1st at the Priory Wellingborough NN8 2LF. Please contact leader for more details.
Linda Walker

Table Tennis



Table tennis for fun resumes on Wednesday 27th September at the Pemberton Centre, 1pm to 2.20, cost is between £1-£2 depending on the turnout. All levels welcome. Lynn Gale

Mahjong,



All levels welcome, Windmill club, Rushden. 1st and 3rd Friday of the month, 7pm - 9pm. Lynn Gale

Classical music



U3A Classical music group has room for new members.

We meet at our home the last Wednesday in the month. Next meeting is October 25th 2-4pm. Theme Woodwind. Contact Linda & Chris Walker for more information. Phone 01933 387892 or email spidar.girl@btinternet.com.

Sewing



The sewing group is having it's first meeting on Thursday 19 October at 14.00 at my house. Anybody who is interested please phone me on 01933 460631 after October 1 or speak to Carole Rider at the monthly meeting. We are trying to encompass all aspects of dressmaking and sewing. Linda Grace

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Rock and Blues



The Rock and Blues Appreciation Group will have its first meeting on Thursday 28th September from 2 until 4 at the group leader's home in Irthlingborough.

Anyone interested in sharing his or her own favourite music (digital only for the moment, unfortunately, so just CD or USB stick) or just listening to the choices of others should contact Jim Morrison at jim@jimandmaggie.co.uk or by phone on 07403 557556 for further details.

Gardening



For our last outdoor meeting of the year the Garden Group visited The Old Rectory at Sudborough. 3 acres of gardens, beautifully kept and a delight to walk around - so much of interest to see. We also had the opportunity to visit the church, an added bonus. Fortunately despite the mixed weather our luck held out and we spent the afternoon in sunshine and ended with tea and cake in the garden. Carole Rider

Country Park Walks



The walks are suitable for members who want to walk at a slower pace to enjoy the scenery, and to occasionally stop for a short rest. Mostly the walks are about 2.5 miles between 10am-12noon



Our Walk on Sunday 10 September was at Harrold Country Park. It was a crisp sunny day with a slight hint of autumn. After walking around the park, we walked to The Bell pub at Odell for lunch and then walked back to the carpark.

Sunday 8 October - Sywell Valley Reservoir and Arboretum NN6 OQX.

We will meet at 10.30am in their car park near the café at the bottom of the hill, (not the car park further up the hill) This is a stunningly beautiful Edwardian period former water supply reservoir and the trees in the Arboretum will be changing to their vibrant autumn colours. Although the circular walk around the Reservoir and Arboretum is 2.5 miles it is possible to just walk along the side of the Reservoir for about 1.5 miles.

The paths are mostly gravel with no hills. There are café and toilet facilities at the Reservoir next to the car park, and for members who at the end of the walk like to go onto Sunday Lunch, we will lunch at Overstone Manor fayre-square restaurant NN6 OBB. They serve a carvery lunch from £6.99 as well as a menu choice Lifts can be arranged from Higham & Rushden.

Please contact Sylvia Wright if you will be coming on the walk, require a lift and if you would like to order lunch Sylvia Wright

Bird Watching



This month we started our new 2017/8 programme on a rather damp drizzly morning with a meeting at Summer Leys. We found things fairly quiet bird wise partly due to weather but also because some management work was being carried out on the reserve. Whilst chain-saws and mowers are not conducive to bird watching it is important these reserves are continually managed to maintain a variety of habitats.



There was a good selection of commoner species at the feeding station including bullfinches, not looking quite as smart as usual as they were just completing their annual moult. This is very much a change over time when the summer visitors are leaving us and the first winter ones are starting to arrive. So a young swallow seen sitting on the wires was about to embark on its first long migration to Africa for the winter. At the same time we saw a single wigeon, the first of many that will be arriving soon from northern climes along with other winter wildfowl. Chris Ebdon

BookMarks Reading Group

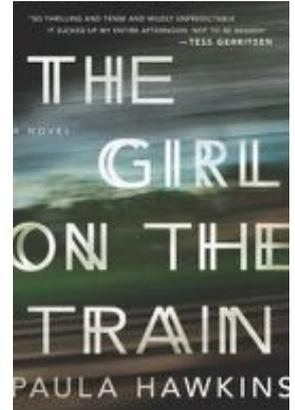


The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins

Chosen and reviewed by Vera Bean

This is the story of Rachel, who has a drink problem and an ex-husband who she still loves. Her vivid imagination conjures up stories about a couple she sees each day from the train on her daily commute.

She gives them names and thinks they are madly in love, as she and her ex once were. Subsequently sees something happen in this couple's garden which changes her opinion. Setting out to find what is happening, Rachel becomes obsessed about her ex-husband's new wife and baby, and because of her alcohol problem, pesters them.



Things move on, lots of psychological episodes, a really gripping story which I thoroughly enjoyed. Others were frustrated by Rachel's drink problem and found it hard to empathise with any of the other characters too. Vera

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We are reading 'And the Mountains Echoed' by Khaled Hosseini next time. Set in Afghanistan, this vivid and engaging story reminds us just how long people have been struggling to triumph over the forces of violence – forces that threaten them even today. Dominica

Fishing



I am a relatively new member of U3A but can tell that a great many of you are interested in nature and the great outdoors. Have you ever thought of fishing? NO MAGGOTS I promise. I am sure that most of you are well aware of the many beautiful reservoirs in Northamptonshire all of which have nature reserves as part of their care for the environment. No doubt the bird watchers and cyclists amongst you take advantage of these resources. Fishing is another activity that allows one to make use of these lovely and peaceful places and can be enjoyed by both men and women, disabled or ablebodied, young or old. I am not suggesting that anyone rushes out and buys a load of kit - my wife and I have plenty of spares for anyone who would like to have a go. Please contact me if you are interested and I will set up a meeting. Remember there is always the chance that you could catch you supper. Peter Thurner

Family History



The August meeting was one of our do-it-yourself sessions, which always turn out to be really useful, sharing ideas, intuitions, experience and resources. In September and October we have talks from members about their own research - proving family stories this month and a local topic, the Wagstaffs of Higham, next month.

The year will wrap up with a session digging into a range of online sources and then a hopefully entertaining Christmas Challenge. Sharon Safford

History



The Royal Chelsea Hospital Visit

31st August 2017

After leaving Skinners hill at 8:30am we had a good ride down to London arriving about 11:00am we had 2 hours to walk along the embankment or down the Kings Rd my Cindy said Kings Rd (lots of shops) after dragging her back to the coach at 1:00pm we set of to the Royal Hospital to be greeted by Albert in full scarlet uniform (really smart) who showed us a short film about the hospital and the pensioners. Founded by King Charles II in 1682 for veterans of the army who were unfit to fight or too old, they had to have 12 years service, or, as a result of wounds or be over 65. They must be of good character and have no spouse or dependents. Since 2009 ladies in the army were allowed with all the same rules.



The building was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and was completed in 1692 it would have been completed two years sooner but due to mismanagement by Lord Ranelagh, the hospital treasurer, and a politician. Money went missing to fund his own house and grounds (nothing changes) the pensioners are free to come and go as they wish, they have a club house and bar, and a thriving bowls league, a big hobbies room, ranging from music to ceramics. And may they have a wonderful life in their final years. Martyn John Penney

Blickling Hall & Estate Visit 7th September 2017

On a sunny September day we set off on our trip to Norfolk.

Due to an accident on the M11 we had lovely coach ride through the Norfolk countryside to Blickling near Aylsham.

We could all do our own exploring as there was no guided tour.

The first record of Blickling Hall was in 1045 when it was owned by Harold Godwinson later to become King Harold II. In the 15th century it was the home of Thomas Boleyn and it is believed to be where Anne Boleyn was born, there is a statue and portrait of Anne in the Hall. In 1930 Philip Kerr the 11th Marquis of Lothian purchased the Estate. He was a politician, diplomat and newspaper editor. In 1938 he held a house party attended by Nehru and his daughter Indira, among the guests was Nancy Astor.



The house at the moment is set as it would have been for that visit with clothes in the bedroom in the Nancy Astor fashion and notes in the dining room of who ate what. The Long Gallery has one of the most historically significant collection of books and manuscripts in England. After the death of the Marquis of Lothian in 1940 the estate passed into the care of the National Trust.

During World War II the house was requisitioned and served as the Officers' Mess of nearby RAF Oulton. RAF servicemen and women were billeted within the grounds in Nissan huts. The lake was used for practice dinghy drills. The RAF Oulton Museum is in the House and is a tribute to the RAF pilots and ground crew who served in the Second World War. Outside are the gardens both formal and informal. Some of us went on a guided tour with a lady dressed as Nora Lindsay, she was a Socialite Lady Gardener employed by Lothian in the 1930s. She remodelled the Parterre garden with large herbaceous beds. We visited the Walled Garden which has been reformed in the last 2 years to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers. In the past all the vegetables and fruit grown here were used to feed the family and staff in the Hall.

After a much needed cup of tea we set off on our journey home via Norwich. A very interesting day out and good weather. Thanks to the organisers. Anne Brown

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Settlements A Tuesday



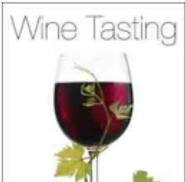
For our August meeting we visited Milton Ernest a place that we all agreed we have driven through many times or visited the garden centre but not really explored the rest of the village. There were too many of us to walk round in one group so we used the excellent walk leaflet that can be downloaded off the web for free!

The full walk is too long to cover in the limited time available so we had the places of most interest pointed out to us before we started including the church with its bread cupboard, the old brewery that is now an office furniture store and the Queens Head pub. We were able to use the Garden Centre car park and finished our exploration with very welcome refreshments in the garden centre café. We can recommend the walk to other U3A members if they want a pleasant day out in an intriguing village with its links to WW2 and Glenn Miller. The walk leaflet is full of local information.



Our September meeting is a visit to Podington - our last visit this year. From October we will be back at St Mary's Church vestry hall for indoor meetings.
Frances Francis

Winetasting



Last month we tasted Eastern European wines namely Puklavec and friends, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Grigio from Slovenia and Paris Street, Pinot Noir from Romania, both interesting but had room for improvement. Also tasted a 6 Puttonyas Tokai which was superb.

Plan for September is Italian. We have room for one or two more group members. Contact Steve on 01933 356784 or at Wednesdays meeting.

Driving



Winter is coming, sooner than expected, it has been a rotten summer. Have you had your car winter checked, tyres, anti-freeze etc.

Have you considered having yourself checked for winter driving, are you confident in driving in poor conditions. A one hour reassessment may help with this at no cost to yourself. Contact Steve 01933 356784 or at the Wednesday meeting.

Settlements B



We had our last Summer visit to Barnwell last week. Margaret & Brian Shelton led us around the pretty village with a stream at its centre.

The Castle and the Manor House have strong connections with the Duke of Gloucester, in fact the Duke and Duchess lived in the Manor House until 1994.

St. Andrew's Church is a Grade 1 Listed building, the beautiful window in the picture shows this.



In the village there is also All Saint's Chancel which we were also able to visit. In there is a sad monument dedicated to a young boy who drowned trying to swim to reach an orange, which in those days was a novelty.

We are moving back to Rushden Hall on October 11th when I will be talking about Irthingborough. Chris Holden

Wine and Dine



The Christmas Lunch (Knuston Hall, Monday 11th Dec) list opened last month and I am already half full. If you want to go to the lunch, get your name down and hand over your £5 deposit. Don't forget the Meeting at the Rushden Town Bowls club for Monday 6th November at 11am. As you know, this is to agree the programme from January to June inclusive and I need your voluntary services to organise one of the events. Without this work, the group would fold and I know you would not want that. Gerry Burnham

Singing for Fun



Following our success last May with our musical show, we are putting on a Christmas Concert at St Peter's Catholic Church Hall on Thursday 7th December at 2pm. The concert will consist of Carols and Christmas songs so there is something for everyone.

Entrance fee of £3 and all proceeds will go to "Spurgeon's" which a local children's charity.

Do come along and support our cause to aid children at this season, we are sure you will not be disappointed.

Gerry P.O. Singing for Fun

Membership 2017

Renewals - generally the progress of recording all membership rolling renewals is proceeding well, although this has brought to light at this point in time that many members seem very slow to be renewing their memberships.

As we approach the first anniversary of those members who joined in October we are now starting to send out these renewal invitations, therefore please play promptly now all those that have outstanding's from 31st August.

Many Group Leaders are now starting to add their groups events to the calendar which is then viewable through the website by all our branch members. Group Leaders please remember that information flow to your group and branch members is only as good as the contents put into the website and Beacon.

Access to see Newsletters, groups calendars and personal information updates can now be carried out through the website. www.highamandrushdenu3a.org.uk

The access for the "members" section – there is a requirement if not previously registered to do so, via the link shown at the login box - the Administration form, scroll down... <http://www.highamandrushdenu3a.org.uk/administration>

U3A Monthly Meetings

Speakers for 2017

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

September 20 th	Victorian Ghosts	Andrew Selwyn
October 18 th	Victorian Sewers	Andy Tipping
November 15 th	Life as a sea Captain/Ships Pilot	Captain William Wells
December 13th Note earlier Date	Northamptonshire Past in Winter	Jon-Paul Carr

Speakers for 2018

Jan. Life on Stage Variety Theatre A look at what was an important part of the entertainment industry.	Mark Walsh
Feb. The American Civil War A fascinating insight into this subject.	John Wright
Mar. Tales from Rockingham Castle. You may have visited but Trish will give an insiders viewpoint.	Trisha Woods
Apr. A talk on his favourite dive yet. A return and much requested visit and will talk about his favourite dive.	Lee Bishop
Jun. Life in War Torn Middle East.	Philip Caine

Committee Listing

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