

Newsletter April 2018



From the Chair

From the view out of the window, it looks more like November than April. It has been misty and wet all day. Any thoughts of gardening, grass cutting etc have been quickly shelved. It's a day for reading! There is a proverb that says, "April showers do bring forth May flowers" – well if that's the case, we should have a profusion! I am tempted to think that T S Elliot was nearer the truth when he said, "April is the cruellest month....". But the weather forecasters, on all the channels, are saying that the weekend will bring about a change in the weather. They are predicting we will be basking in warm sunshine by the time you read this!

Although we all like to talk (moan?) about the weather it is a fact that we have some of the most changeable weather in the world. And whilst we all feel that it snows too much too often, that it always seems to be raining and that our summers are just far too hot (that was a joke!) nothing seems to last for long. We only have to consider the latest snowfall. Although a few very remote locations needed the assistance of Army helicopters most of us were back on the roads in a few days.

Finally, an apology. Last month's newsletter said that April would be the first month in our new venue. That was incorrect! We have not received an update from Freedom Leisure regarding their progress nor when they will "need us out". So until you hear otherwise we continuing to meet at the Pemberton. Phil

Notices

We're not going nowhere....Yet!

Bet that heading has caught your attention! I apologise for the fact that some people are uncertain about where the monthly meeting is to be held.

We have made the decision about WHERE we will hold the monthly meeting but not WHEN the changeover will take place.

We will remain at the Pemberton for as long as possible. Rest assured that we will make it absolutely clear when we move, the date of the first meeting at the Windmill etc. You'll not miss that announcement! Phil Grace

Proposed New Group

Ukulele



Message: Martin Penney and Geoff Eaton are thinking of starting a new Ukulele Group up in the Rushden area. If any body is interested in joining us please get in touch with either of us.

Guitar for Beginners



Although there are a number of Guitar groups now, we are thinking of starting a new Beginners Group around Sept. - after the main holiday season. If you have never played, or tried many years ago, this is your opportunity to work your fingers on both hands, your brain, eyes & memory + attempt to sing along (not necessarily all at once to begin with!) Learning a new instrument keeps the mind active & stretches it - much more beneficial than Sudoku or crosswords, apparently.

Please get in touch via the Guitar contacts on the U3A website/newsletter for further information. Karin, Andrew & Ron

Settlements A



For our March meeting Margaret and Brian gave us a talk on Titchmarsh illustrated with photographs taken by Kathy. The village is a thriving community with an interesting village shop run by volunteers. John Dryden the first poet laureate spent his childhood in the village and there is a memorial to him in the medieval church. The village has links with many historical events including the Gunpowder Plot. Like many of the settlements we have looked at there are several listed buildings including attractive thatched cottages. Some streets within the village have interesting names such as Plum Pudding Lane (see photo). We are looking forward to our visit in August when a member of the local history society has offered to take us round the village.



At our April meeting Janet, Roy and Wendy will be talking about Twywell and Slipton. Frances Francis

Events



Ladies Day @ Newmarket

As tickets have now been purchased for the Grandstand & Paddock at Newmarket for Ladies Day on Thursday 12th July, we now need all those who have signed up for this event to finalise their payments.

Please send a cheque made out to 'Higham & Rushden U3A to the Treasurer', Mrs Jean Mole, and write your name and the words "Ladies Day" on the reverse of the cheque.

Alternatively if you are going to be at the next Pemberton Meeting on Wednesday 18th April, please pay Lynn Gale (Acting Treasurer) at the Treasurer's table.

The total price for the trip, including coach and entry to the Grandstand & Paddock is £45.

Most (but not all of you) have paid a deposit of £5 and will therefore need to pay a balance of £40.

We will be giving out more details in May & June, (including pick up points & times) but please note that you will need to provide your own picnic.

For those of you who have not yet signed up for this exciting event, we can still get a few more tickets... but you need to hurry. Jean



Settlements B



Derek Blunt's talk to us was called "Spires & Shires", a title often linked to Northamptonshire.

Derek has a lot of talks and has also written books.. He gave us a very informative and interesting talk about villages in the county, 60 miles x 45 miles in size. He told us lots of interesting facts, such as: Marion

Rothschild (many years ago) was an authority on fleas!

Newton in the Willows has a connection with the Tresham family. He showed us a picture in Daventry where Catesby hid in his mother's house after failing to blow up Parliament before he was found.



He also had a quiz of 12 questions, not asking us the name of the village, but an obscure question relating to it, there was a prize for who had the most correct answers, no-one had 12

We have one more meeting in Rushden Hall before going out to four villages in the summer

Handicrafts



At our February meeting, we experimented with Silk Clay. This is an air drying clay which had quite plastic properties whilst working with it. We endeavored to make decorative buttons and some members of the group made a number of floral motifs, which they could use to decorate greetings.



By and large we found the clay difficult to use. But it's main advantage was the pleasant smell and the air dry property. Some of us prefer Fimo, which is more smelly and needs cooking. I took some to my grandchildren and they loved it.



March saw us having a go at Quilling with. Christine, one of our members. This is a craft that uses narrow strips of paper, turning in a quilling tool, to make a variety of shapes. After making a number of shapes. You can then arrange these into pretty images., mainly floral. Everyone made a lovely greeting card. This activity was enjoyed by everyone. Diana Turner

Classical Music Appreciation



Due to declining attendance there is a serious risk that this group will have to close. The April meeting will be the last unless we can recruit some more members, so if you are interested in classical music please think about whether you would enjoy spending a couple of hours each month listening to the themed musical choices of all the group members in a comfortable friendly social setting. Linda Walker is the group leader and will have a table at the April meeting in the Pemberton Centre if you would like to express an interest, or you can contact her via the website.

Country Park Walks



Guess where we walked last Sunday as it's not every day you can walk past an Alpaca? To find out the answer have a look on our Country Park Walks archive page. Our next walk on Sunday 13 May will be at Sywell Country Park and Arboretum. We will meet at 10.30am in the main car park next to the café and walk around the reservoir and through The Arboretum. It is about 2.5 miles but there is a shorter option. Spring and Autumn are the perfect time to visit Sywell as the colours of the trees are quite spectacular. For those who like to stay on for lunch we will go to Overstone Manor, Sywell. They do a very good carvery with other menu options available. For anyone wanting a snack there is a café and toilets in the park. Could you please let me know if you would like to have lunch so that I can book a table in advance . New members welcome – for more information please phone me or just turn up on the day. Sylvia Wright



BookMarks

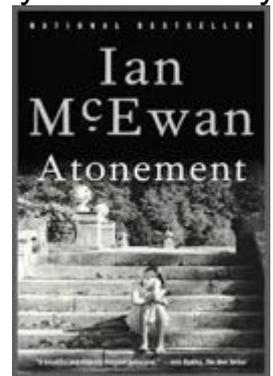
Atonement by Ian McEwan



Chosen and reviewed by Brian Shelton

The novel opens in 1935 at the 'Tallis' mansion where the family are due to meet for a family celebration. Thirteen year old Briony has written a play in honour of her older brother, but rehearsals are not going well.

The twin boys are unable to remember their lines, and her cousin Lola has stolen the leading role. Also at the house is Cecilia, her elder sister, who has just graduated from college, along with Robbie, the son of the housekeeper. Later on Briony thinks she sees Robbie attacking Cecilia in the library and then reads a letter from Robbie to Cecilia containing explicit sexual details. This confirms her suspicions that her sister was being raped, and she makes an accusation that she will repent the rest of her life.



The next two parts of the novel shift to the spring of 1940 as Hitler's forces are sweeping across Europe, with Robbie Turner caught up in the disastrous retreat to Dunkirk. Briony becomes a nurse in one of the military hospitals in London.

The group felt the descriptions in these two sections of the book were excellent and made the effort of reading the first third of the book all the more worthwhile.

Brilliant and utterly enthralling in its description of childhood, love and war, England and the class system, the novel is a profoundly moving exploration of shame and forgiveness and atonement.

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'Child 44' is our next read, and is the debut novel for Tom Robb Smith. It is set in the days of Stalin's Soviet dream society and inspired by a real-life serial killer. The events that lead Leo into the position of being 'an enemy of the State' are echoing in the news even today. Dominica Jones

Knit and Natter

Knit & Natter



We meet every 2 weeks at the leaders home. We are a small, very sociable group and as it says on the title, there is a lot of natter going on during the meetings. We do knitting for charity sometimes as well as making our own projects. At the moment I have spaces for 2 more people. Anyone interested please contact Kathy Arnold for further detail



Singing for Fun



Friends of the Singing for Fun Group are holding a show/concert on 12th May at 7pm at the Heritage Centre called "Singing' the Sixties. Money is being raised for Alzheimer's. Tickets are £5 and are obtainable from either Chris or Gerry.

There will be a raffle and refreshments will be available in the interval. You would be welcome to join in with some of the singing and if you so felt inclined, have a dance round the tables. This is going to be a fun event so get your tickets sooner than later. Gerry Burnham (P.O. Singing for Fun)

Wine and Dine.



Next Month(Monday 14th May, 11am at Rushden Town Bowls Club) sees the 6 monthly meeting where we organise the programme for July to December. At this meeting, I will be handing over the reins to Mike Gibbons who has volunteered to take over from me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank

everyone for their support and no doubt you will support Mike the same way. Good luck Mike Gerry Burnham

Bird Watching



With most of our usual venues along the Nene valley flooded after the heavy Easter rain it was somewhat fortunate our April meeting was at Stanford reservoir on the Northants/Leics border.



Supplying the Grand Union canal this venue is not open to the public but we obtained a special permit for the group. Starting at the inflow end it didn't feel very spring like and there was still a selection of winter wildfowl out on the open water.

However we did hear chiffchaffs calling in the willows and a sand martin flew past, our first summer migrants of the year. We also saw a buzzard being mobbed by rooks and some of the group briefly glimpsed a tree creeper. Moving up to the dam end a pair of grey wagtails were feeding along the overflow stream, possibly nesting under the foot bridge.

These are delightful birds, more noticeably yellow than grey, found by fast flowing water and always guaranteed to brighten up the dullest of days. After the walk we had lunch at the White Hart in South Kilworth which doesn't normally open on Tuesday lunchtime but did specially for us. Chris

Days Out Car Share Trips 2018.



Our 23/4/18 St Georges day trip to Wimpole Hall is full. We will put any availability on The Days Out group details entry on The H & R U3A website. Or contact us in the usual ways.

Stantonbury Theatre MK14 6NB

Saturday 21/4/18 2 30 The Vicar of Dibley A Play based on the TV series. £13. Our car is full. If you can offer transport please let us know. Tickets are available contact leaders for details

Other Trips. All car-share trips unless stated otherwise.

Sun 15/4/18 Carpetbaggers Secret Warfare Museum Harrington NN6 9PF. £5 entrance. Guided tour arranged. Transport available. Places available.

Sun 13/5/18 Twinwood Airfield Museum MK41 6AB with Glen Miller connections. With optional lunch to be arranged. Places available. 2017 entrance was £4.

Mon 2/7/18 Wrest Park MK45 4HR Free entrance to English Heritage members. Optional Archaeological store £3 including E.H. members Places available.

Mon 30/7/18 Apethorpe Palace PE8 5AQ. 4 places available. £7 65 entrance [including E.H. members] with guided tour. Please be aware there are no loos at the property.

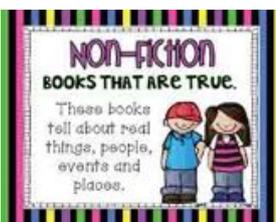
Sunday Lunch Group



Our next Sunday lunch, 27/5/18 12 30 for 1pm. Booking essential. Venue to be arranged. The Carriage House Higham Ferrers has a new menu including Sunday lunch £12 for main course. Has anyone tried it? If so please come and give the Days out table a report.

The meals in the week are excellent 2 for £15 0r £8 50 each. We will have a sample menu on the Days Out table.

Non Fiction Book Group



Next Meeting 16/4/18, 2-4pm at leaders home. New members welcome.

We read our first book, William Dalrymple's Return of a King. 608 pages. One book three of us would not have read in a thousand years. Excellent, thought provoking. The first 100 pages were hard going setting the scene on Britain's ill

thought out interference in Afghanistan in the 19th century. It reflects our involvement in the 20th century and more recently. It may sound dull but was eye-opening and did have some laugh out loud moments.

Our next read is Toast by Nigel Slater the TV chef, 256 pages, is a much lighter read. Each short chapter has food as its title. Nigel tells us of his early life experiences. Gives some interesting reasons why food became his passion.

History



History Talk April 5th 2018. GUERNICA by the Rev Paul Needle

A large and disturbing painting, Guernica, by Picasso reflected the impact of The Spanish Civil War and caught the attention of the rest of Europe. Rev Paul Needle helped us make sense of what was a complicated political divide that impacted Spain and still reverberates within Spanish Politics today.

Driving through Spain in 1993 in a recently bought car on a trip of discovery misfortune befell Paul as the car broke down in the town of Belchite. While the car was repaired Paul discovered how the Spanish civil war had devastated the town. He began to trace the History of THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR which lasted from 1936 until 1939.



The Spanish population had been restless under the rule of King Alfonso as Spain as the country was suffering economically. In the years from 1931 and 1936 the Government changed several times between the Right wing Nationalists and the Left wing Socialists with elections often resulting in violent clashes. The country was dominated by the power and influence of the Church and Army. General Franco launched a military coup in 1936 from Morocco and the country split into warring factions. Franco was supported by other right-wing leaders such as Mussolini and Hitler. Fighting was intense and brutal as Franco tried to take over the mainly Eastern provinces. Paul showed us photographs of towns now deserted ruins, walls with evidence of brutal shootings. Madrid remained proudly defiant resisting attack. Eventually Franco's Forces who were better organised won, and he controlled Spain in a one party state until 1975 with censorship and suppression.

Franco had help and support from the German Luftwaffe, and in April 1937 they bombed the town of Guernica on Market Day, first with conventional bombs and then subsequently incendiary devices. This was an evil predictor of future war tactics, as perhaps as many as 1,645 residents died. Picasso expressed the tragic event in a huge mural and following international outrage many foreign volunteers rushed to support the fighting. The Battle of Ebro lasted from July until November in 1938 with fierce fighting across the river. At the outbreak of the Second World War Spain declared it was non-combatant.

Understanding events and passions in a civil war and the factions and divisions it creates, is always difficult and the History group appreciated what was a clear, erudite and concise explanation of a country many of us enjoy as tourists. Thank you to Rev Paul Needle for an excellent talk Ann Kemp 2018

Gardening



Our April meeting at Rushden Hall was well attended by 36 members when we had a plant sale and quiz.

Many thanks to everyone who generously donated and bought plants. We raised £50-95 which will offset the cost of speakers during the year.

At the April Pemberton meeting we will be selling any remaining plants. We will also be taking names/money for our summer trips. Carole

WARWICK VISIT

A coach outing to the interesting town of Warwick on Thursday 14th June. Morning visit to the Lord Leycester Hospital, a half timbered mediaeval building which, since the 16th century, has been home to retired servicemen. Free time for lunch. Afternoon visit to Hill Close Gardens. These Victorian hedged gardens were saved from the bulldozer in the 1990's. Fare £32.50 includes guided tour and refreshments at both of these Grade Listed venues. This visit is open to all U3A members. For more information contact Group Leaders Carole Rider or Sandra Cox (Garden Group), or Kathy Main (Digital Photography, Garden and History Groups)



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
Front of House	Steve Evans
Publicity	Peter Wright
Web Liaison	Mike Mimms
Committee Member	Jenny Carr
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

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Apr 18 th | Pemberton [Note Change of Speaker]
Rushden Historical Transport Society
Past, Present and Future | John Holdom-Eyles |
| 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 |