



Annual Show

Bishop's Stortford U3A Winter 2019 Newsletter

Registered Charity Number 1132055
Website <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>

Committee Members



		
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 <p>Committee Member</p> <p>Stuart Jacobs sbjacobs@hotmail.co.uk 01279 305315</p>	<p>Non-Committee Member</p> <p>Diary Compiler</p> <p>Jean Hootton j.hootton@ntlworld.com 01279 654095</p>	<p>Non-Committee Member</p> <p>Newsletter Editor</p> <p>Lesley Mishan Lesley.mishan@phonecoop.coop 07807 156774</p>

Chairman's Report Winter 2018



I hope all our members are well and looking forward to Christmas this year as much as I am.

I am halfway through my second year as Chairman and mostly enjoying my role in this wonderful national and international organisation started many years ago in France.

My third grandchild will be one year old just before Christmas, and June and I are very much looking forward to his party when the whole family will be present, so we have a double celebration in December.

The last eighteen months have certainly been eventful with many achievements and changes.

Our new computer system Beacon is finally operational and supplying us with useful statistics. We now know that between 125 and up to 225 people are attending our main monthly meetings, a figure I would like to build on. I thank Jeff Poynter, Chris Morris and the rest of the team for their work taking the project this far, also Ken Wheatley and Alan Draper for advising your Committee on the technical aspects at Committee meetings. I would encourage our members to look at the system and use the software whenever possible, which has endless possibilities to make administration easier.

Our Annual Show in August continues to be a highlight of the year especially for those exhibiting and the afternoon provided the garden groups with funds to put back into the groups. At our Group Coordinators' meeting it was suggested that the format be changed and many useful suggestions were made and these have been passed to a larger sub-committee which will benefit from an increased number of volunteers. They will make their recommendations to your full committee as soon as possible.

Our thanks go out to all those members that have volunteered to make the afternoon a success and all those that have exhibited throughout the years with craft items, photographs, flowers, vegetables and many other items.

My thanks go to Debbie Monkhouse and her team for the wonderful organisation. Debbie is unfortunately standing down in August 2019 and we must find a replacement, so if you feel inclined to assist, please let Debbie know. We are looking for several volunteers, so please step up if at all possible.

We are still a few short of the full complement of Executives which is stopping us from doing more for our members, so if you feel like assisting please do get in touch with one of the committee members, they will be glad to help with any questions.

I am always staggered by the number of members that do assist and it is often the case that many of the functions are carried out by a team of members, rather than one person and I am keen to encourage this practice as the work is shared.

We now have a team looking after the Group Managers role of Rosalind Howlett, Rene Locke and Sandra Baker. We are looking for assistance with the Membership Secretary Role and someone who can advise us on Communications, so please volunteer if you can. If none of those roles appeal to you, we do have additional roles so please come forward if you would like to help in any way or become more involved.

Our current membership stands at about 1150 in numbers and has seen a small reduction year on year for the last five years and I would like to stop that slide and start increasing numbers again. The combined membership of Bishop's Stortford and Thorley U3A only accounts for 20% of the eligible population of our town so there is plenty of scope for improvement. You can play a part in that by sharing our publications with friends and neighbours, encouraging them to come along and try our meetings. I would like to set up a project group to come up with some ideas to action this and move the project forward so if you want to use your skills please volunteer.

I would like to thank our Newsletter Editor, Lesley Mishan. This is her second edition, the first being brilliant and has received high praise from the readers. I am sure this will be even better.

It now only remains for me to wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year and hope 2019 brings you everything you want and a big thankyou to all our members for your support.

Keith Hicks
Chairman

Christine Miller

**A very respected and sadly missed
Bishop's Stortford U3A member**

It is with shock and sadness to hear of the sudden, untimely death of Christine Miller. Christine was such a great asset to our U3A having arranged so many outings; usually one every month from April to September. She also served on the Committee as Outings and Events Coordinator from 2013 to 2015. Christine had great organisational skills and used them to advantage when our U3A was planning the 25th Anniversary celebrations at the Manor of Groves Hotel.

She will certainly be missed by so many members.

Richard Cawse

**Bishop's Stortford U3A
Minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting held at the Methodist
Church, Bishop's Stortford 12th March, 2018**

The meeting was opened at 14.30 by the Chairman, Keith Hicks who extended a warm welcome to all.

1) Apologies for absence: Susan Shaw, Jack Treves

2) Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting and Chairman's report

The minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting were not read out by the Chairman as they had previously been published on the website and available via hard copy throughout 2017 for perusal and comment. They were accepted as a true and correct record.

Proposed: Jenny McGregor
Seconded: Barbara Beston
Vote: Unanimously accepted

The 2017 minutes were signed by the Chairman Keith Hicks.

3) Matters Arising: None

4) Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Keith Hicks gave his report for 2017/18. Copy attached to the file copy of the March 2018 Minutes also available on the website or via hard copy upon request from the Secretary.

5) Treasurer's Report and the Appointment of Examiner

The examined accounts for 2017 were presented. The Treasurer, Alasdair Hidden, gave his report and addressed various items in the accounts. He pointed out the improvement since 2016, mainly due to the disappointing uptake of the £1290 available to groups from Gift Aid for capital grants and loans. Together with other savings he reported we had an improvement on income exceeding £3000 which impacted our cash reserves (mentioned under balance sheet).

He also said that there are currently 1175 paid up members compared to 1251 five years ago representing a 6% reduction in members. There was also a considerable decline in outings of 40% over 2012 and urged members to consider volunteering to organise an outing or event which are the most popular fixtures of the Bishop's Stortford U3A calendar.

Central Accounts now held £2,593 on behalf of Groups as discussed and set out in the January 2018 newsletter and reflected in the March 2017 Accounts. The new system of central administration appears to be working well without any disruption to group activities.

The Accounts had been previously circulated to the committee, copy attached to file copy of AGM minutes, or available on the website or via hard copy upon request. The Treasurer asked for questions relating to the accounts but there were none forthcoming.

Subscriptions

The Treasurer explained that two newsletters per year, posted out to members, and the new Beacon computerised membership system had been budgeted for. This fact together with our existing cash reserves meant that Bishop's Stortford U3A will generate cash net funds to cover our expenditure, therefore, subscriptions will not be increased from £10.

The Treasurer asked for questions relating to the subscription level but none were forthcoming.

After a vote the examined accounts for the year ended 31st December 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Maria Jackson

Seconded: Don Swain

Vote: Unanimously accepted

6) Approval of the Examiner of Accounts (Auditor)

The Treasurer thanked the Examiner, Robert Inglis, for his advice, diligence and hard work examining the accounts over the past many years, and stated that Mr. Inglis would receive a small token of gratitude from the Committee. Mr. Inglis had decided to step down as Examiner and was thanked very much for his huge contribution to Bishop's Stortford U3A.

His place was being taken by Peter Bass, also a member of Bishop's Stortford U3A, who had agreed to examine the accounts from year ending December 2018. A vote was taken and Mr. Bass was unanimously elected.

Proposed: Kath Hird

Seconded: Kim Shaw

Vote: Unanimously elected

7. Election of Officers

A Nomination form had been received for the re-election of committee member Keith Hicks.

New committee members had been recruited Kim Shaw, Kath Hird, Jim Paterson, Jack Treves, Ken Wheatley and Carole Scott.

The Chairman introduced the full committee going forward for 2018/19. The Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder to accept the existing member willing to stand for a further term of office (the Chairman) and to approve the election of committee members for the length of time left of their 3 year term of office, and approve the election of five new members. The committee members are listed below with the positions they are being elected to and were unanimously voted on to the committee as Trustees.

Proposed: Robert Inglis
Seconded: Jenny McGregor
Vote: Unanimously elected

The committee for 2017/2018

Chairman	Keith Hicks
Vice Chairman/ Outings & Events Co-ordinator	Susan Shaw
Treasurer	Jack Treves
Secretary	Kim Shaw
Membership Secretary	Kath Hird
Website Co-ordinator and Assistant Diary Compiler	Alan Draper
Groups Manager	Sandra Baker
Speaker Co-ordinator	Jim Paterson
Committee Member	Rosalind Howlett
Committee Member	Rene Locke
Committee Member	Ken Wheatley
Committee Member	Carole Scott

8. Any Other Business

The following written proposal had been received prior to the AGM.

“That the minutes, excluding any matters/discussion where a member’s privacy must be respected, of all Bishop’s Stortford U3A Executive Committee, AGM’s, Hertfordshire Network of U3A’s, the Cluster Group, Group Co-Ordinators and any other such meetings should be available on the Bishop’s Stortford U3A website.”

Proposer: Dave Branchflower

Secunder: Jeff Poynter
Vote: Unanimously accepted and carried by the AGM

The AGM was followed by a well received and interesting presentation from Simon Marlow of Age UK Hertfordshire about his work helping people over 55 resettle at home after a spell in hospital and to try and avoid them being re-admitted. He stated that loneliness and social isolation, particularly with older men who had lost their wives or lived alone, was the biggest problem and asked that members of Bishop's Stortford U3A think about volunteering for the visitor scheme. Simon's contact numbers can be obtained from Jim Paterson the Speaker Coordinator.

Refreshments were served after the meeting.

Website address <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>

Change of wording in Object Clause (1)

The 'Third Age Trust' has been having on-going discussions with The Charity Commission regarding the presentation of accounts. In the past some finances have been split between 'Charitable' and 'Non-Charitable' activities.

After long consultations between the two parties, the Charity Commission has now declared that all activity carried out by a U3A must be classed as charitable and within the 'Object Clause' in its constitution.

The Third Age Trust is advising all U3A's in England and Wales to update their 'Object Clause' to keep within The Charity Commissions rules on financial management.

The Charity Commission has agreed that a single 'Object Clause' can be adopted by all U3A's and it has agreed that the following wording can be adopted.

"The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development."

Your Committee has agreed to opt into that clause and we will ask for your support on this at our AGM. If you would like further details on this, please consult our website on <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>.

Bishop's Stortford U3A AGM Methodist Hall, South Street

Proposed Agenda 2.30pm Monday 11th March, 2019

1. Apologies.
2. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting.
3. Matters Arising.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Treasurer's Report.
6. Approval and Appointment of the Examiner of Accounts (Auditor).
7. The change to the Object Clause of the Constitution.
8. Election of Officers.
9. AOB

**AGM Election Form Bishop's Stortford U3A
Nomination form for the election of Committee Members which
incorporates being a Trustee of Bishop's Stortford U3A
AGM 11th March 2019**

Name of candidate (Block letters)	Signature of Candidate *	Position/vacancy
Date		
	Proposer **	Seconder **
Name		
Signature		
Date		

Please return completed form to the secretary by **Mon, 11th Feb 2019**.

Kim Shaw, 5 Thorley Hill, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 3ND

- * I (the candidate) am not disqualified from holding the office of Trustee for Bishop's Stortford U3A.
- ** N.B. The proposer and seconder may not be a member of the current Executive Committee

Membership Renewals for 2019-20

Your current Bishop's
Stortford U3A Membership
expires on 31st March 2019.



Therefore, if you wish to remain a member you must pay your renewal subscription of £10 before then. Your new membership will run from 1st April 2019 until 31st March 2020.

You can pay in any one of three ways at any time between 1st January and 31st March 2019. In exceptional circumstances payments would also be accepted in December 2018.

1. Pay in cash or by cheque at any of the U3A Monthly Meetings between January and March 2019. Cheques should be made payable to 'Bishop's Stortford U3A' and should be made out in advance so you don't hold up the queue while you write out your cheque. You will be given your new Membership Card immediately. With their agreement, you can also pay and collect the cards of other people.

2. Post or deliver a cheque (payable to 'Bishop's Stortford U3A') to myself at 5 Pishiobury Drive, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 0AD. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your Membership Card(s).

3. Pay online by Bank Transfer using the following information

Sort Code 40-12-03

Account No. 01675540

Reference Your surname and Membership Number (which is printed on your current Membership Card)

If you use this method you will either need to send me a stamped self-addressed envelope for the return of your new Card(s), or make arrangements for the Card(s) to be picked up at one of the Monthly Meetings after you have paid. The Cards will be at the Information Desk - you will not need to queue with the other members waiting to pay.

From my point of view, the earlier you pay the better because it spreads the workload (which for about 1000 members is quite high !!!). Thank you.

Kath Hird

No E-mail address? What are you missing?!!!



NEWSMAIL is usually sent out to members twice a month by email.

The first **NEWSMAIL** is sent at the beginning of the month and gives brief details of the speaker and their subject at the forthcoming monthly meeting as well as details of any outings, holidays etc. that will be on sale at the meeting. The second **NEWSMAIL** is sent after the monthly meeting and includes the group diary for the following month.

Both editions also include other items such as groups with vacancies and new groups, reminders of where you can get discounts with your B.S. U3A membership, subscription reminders, etc. plus sometimes details of non U3A activities. Essentially, **NEWSMAIL** is a cost-effective way of keeping our membership informed about current issues on a regular basis.

HOWEVER - at present we only have correct email addresses for about 63% of our members. Although we know some members do not have email addresses, we are fairly certain that more than 63% do. If you are not receiving the **NEWSMAIL** then we do not have your email address recorded centrally, and you are missing out on this regular source of up-to-date information about your U3A.

In case you are worried about security, Bishop's Stortford U3A now uses a bespoke management system centrally to store members details, rather than holding them on a personal computer. This should provide greater security from hacking and unless we have explicit consent we do not share e-mail addresses with any third parties or even widely within our membership.

Attachments to the emails are pdf files (Portable Document Format) and can be read by multiple programmes and on all types of devices.

So, if you are not getting the **NEWSMAILS** at present and you would like to receive them in future, and you have an e-mail address please contact Kath Hird (Membership Secretary) on kath.hird@talktalk.net to let her know what it is. If you do not have an e-mail address yourself but you have a friend, relative or neighbour with one who would be happy to pass on information to you then (with their permission of course) please let Kath know that address which we will attribute to you for communication purposes.

Alan Draper

Message from the Editor



Please email articles to me, preferably in Word, **with images sent separately**, to arrive by Friday 24th May 2019 for inclusion in the next newsletter. Please note: one page is about 350 words, two pages could be about 550 words and a photo.

I do reserve the right to edit articles and photographs so that they can fit within the overall layout of the Newsletter, especially as we have a **limit of 48 pages**.

I should also point out that any views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee.

Lesley Mishan lesley.mishan@phonecoop.coop

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Coffee Mornings

As Baroosh are now not opening until 11am in the morning, we can no longer use them.



As from November 2018 we will be holding Coffee Mornings at Cote in North Street. It is in their back room, which is nice and cosy, and will start at 10am as we always have, 3rd Tuesday in the month.

The Manager seems very pleasant and is more than happy to have us there.

They also do a nice breakfast there, if anyone is hungry!

I hope we will get lots of people supporting the Coffee Morning there.

See you all soon.

Jenny McGregor

Original London Walks



Now have vacancies

The Original London Walks group now has vacancies for new active members to join for 2019.

Walks will be on the second Thursdays of March, May, July and October.

If interested please contact **Dave Branchflower** 01279 465554

Up an Coming Outings & Events



13th Nov Warhorse Derek Francis
1st Dec U3A Christmas Lunch Rose Anderson
1st Dec U3A Christmas Concert Sylvia Wilde
5th Dec Joint Christmas Lunch (groups 1,3 & International 1 & 2) Susan Shaw
6th Dec Wisley Barbara Chappell
12th Dec St Albans Market & Abbey Carole Scott
13th Dec I/T & Computer Group Lunch Colin Reed

15th March Gin Lane
Dave Branchflower

10th April Oxford City Tour (blue badge)
Maria Jackson NEW

May Oakham/Rutland Water/Boat Trip
Maria Jackson NEW

23rd May Braintree Silk Museum/Wilkin Tiptree train, museum and afternoon tea
Carole Scott NEW

17th-21st June Eastbourne
Derek Francis

27th June The Royal Windsor Landscape & Heritage Tour
Dave Branchflower

11th July Norwich (history group)
Jenny McGregor NEW

August Day trip to Brugge
Maria Jackson NEW

16th-21st September Sidmouth
Rose Anderson

Monthly Speakers 2018-2019

Bishop's Stortford U3A have enjoyed a wide variety of speakers at the monthly meeting over the past few months with the promise of more to come in 2019.

The speaker meetings are held at the Methodist Church, South Street on the second Monday of the month, commencing at 2.30pm.



During 2018 we had speakers as diverse as **Bill Hamilton** the renowned BBC news reporter, **Karen Adams** a local artist giving us a personalised painting demonstration and **Clair Mulley**, a renowned author giving us an insight into the true characters behind her bestselling books. **Jane Malyon** gave us her personal story of being adopted and how it provided her motivation in life and we heard from **Bernard Lockett**, the leading authority on Gilbert and Sullivan about the stories behind their music.



The most colourful meeting was when we heard from **Jenny Gibbs** under the heading of 'A Turkish Shirley Valentine'. Jenny related her story, whilst dressed in full Turkish costume, of starting a new life in Turkey at the age of 50.

The new year starts in **January** with a talk by **Ian Keable** on David Devant, England's first Magician and founder of The Magic Circle, complete with live magic tricks.

February brings **Brian Carline** reminiscing about growing up in 1940's and 50's Britain and how life has changed since then.

March sees the **AGM** but we will also hear the latest news from East Herts Council on the Old River Lane development.

Martin Lloyd gives us the history of the passport in **April** and **Warren Ashton** provides insight into the origin and meanings of everyday phrases in **May**.

Time for a bit of live music and optional dancing in **June** when Paul Adams gives us his one man show '**Rock and Roll will Never Die**'.

I hope there is something which appeals to you in the programme and look forward to seeing you there.

Jim Paterson
Speaker Arranger

Curiosity Corner

Look Carefully!?

This sight was photographed near Much Hadham by a member of the Brisk Walking group on their May walk.

Suggestions please.



Armistice 100

The Peoples March

It had promised to rain so dressed in full dog walking gear, rainproof coat, hat and walking boots, I set off early on Sunday 11th November to catch the 8.24 am train to London. It was pretty full and some like me had been fortunate to win tickets in the free ballot, others intended to watch the various commemorations along Whitehall.

I met up with my friend and her mother at Charing Cross and we walked down the Mall to be checked in by security and form up facing Admiralty Arch. Made to feel special we were given bottles of water, coffee, muffins and a brooch, all free. The weather by now was quite sunny, and we could see the proceedings taking place on giant screens.



It was a privilege just to stand in the Mall which is usually inundated with traffic, and watch military groups form up on their way to Horse Guards Parade. By now I felt rather scruffy as many others in the march were sartorially dressed with black coats and hats. Oh well it couldn't be helped, but I was there to remember my Grandfather who was conscripted in 1916 and served in East Africa before being wounded and convalescing in South Africa, and also my husband's Great Uncle who enlisted in 1915, was sent to Gallipoli and was killed two weeks later.

Walking through Admiralty Arch and turning right, took us down Whitehall, and to the Cenotaph, which by now was covered in a sea of red tributes. Many in our march of ten thousand, had wreaths too and these were taken by an expert army of volunteers and carefully laid on the ground.

It was very poignant, respectful and something I will never forget.

Carole Scott

History Group 1 Summer Outings

We have had two very successful outings this year:- one in June to Lichfield and the National Memorial Arboretum, organised by David Branchflower, and the second in July to Lincoln by Kay Poynter.



We had a Guide in Lichfield who took us on a tour of this Cathedral City and round the Museum. We learned that it was famous for being the birthplace of Samuel Johnson and David Garrick among others and was one of the places that "Cromwell knocked about a bit". It had in fact changed sides no less than five times during the Civil War, a conflict which badly damaged the magnificent three-spired Medieval Cathedral.

In the afternoon we visited the National Memorial Arboretum, which was a revelation to us all. The award winning Remembrance Centre was opened in 2017 after a large scale regeneration project and in 2018 was awarded the Gold Large Visitor Attraction of the Year. The Arboretum contains over 30,000 trees and 350 memorials to the armed forces, civilian organisations and voluntary bodies that played a part in the service of our country.



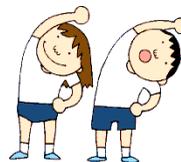
Fortunately we did not have to walk round the Arboretum, (It was a very hot day!) but boarded a land train to take us round the Arboretum with a commentary on the various memorials. Particularly moving was the one entitled "Shot at Dawn" in memory of all the soldiers shot for so-called cowardice in the First World War.

Our coach driver on the visit to Lincoln, also on a very hot day, earned our undying gratitude by dropping us off at the top of Lincoln hill! A walk round the Castle walls was almost a complete history of England in itself, and the special building housing an original Magna Carta and the Forest Charter inside the Castle was equally impressive. The Victorian prison inside the Castle, gave a chilling insight into the awful conditions endured by the inmates, some only babies! The Cathedral, dedicated in 1090, must be one of the most beautiful in England and is still, despite fires, wars and earthquakes! The Medieval Library was open so we were able to watch a very skillful artist copying one of the rare manuscripts, using the same paper, brushes and inks used on the originals.



Kay Poynter

Bishop's Stortford U3A Activity Groups



There has been much publicity about the health benefits of regular exercise for all age groups. Members of the Bishop's Stortford U3A have got no excuse. We have no less than 10 activity groups of various sorts – meeting weekly and all open to both men and women, although it has to be said the men in general seem a little shy!!

For the most energetic there are the **KEEP MOVING and AQUA AEROBICS** Groups. At **KEEP MOVING**, members move around



to music for half the session and do toning exercises for the remainder, either sitting in a chair or using a mat on the floor. There is a qualified teacher and the pace and content is geared to our age group so it's good for cardio-vascular exercise but doesn't include high impact moves.

The **AQUA AEROBICS** Group is similar but because the movements are done in water, joints are even more protected. No previous experience is needed for either group and places are almost always available.

For people who want to continue exercising but perhaps have mobility or stamina problems there are the **KEEP FIT FOR THE LESS ENERGETIC** and **FITNESS WITH FUN** groups. Most of the exercises in both groups are carried out seated but the movements (still done to music) are designed nevertheless to give a workout to the whole body.

The **FITNESS WITH FUN** group started last year because **KEEP FIT FOR THE LESS ENERGETIC** was so popular it rarely had vacancies. The new group has a highly qualified teacher with a lot of experience of working with people who have various medical problems and it can still accept new members.

Separately from these four groups we have three **PILATES** groups. Here the movements are rather more precise and mostly performed on the floor on a mat. They are meant to be slow, controlled and flowing, and performed with thoughtful awareness. There is considerable emphasis on developing core stability, aligning the body properly and breathing efficiently. The end result should be better balance, flexibility and stamina, and this perhaps accounts for why it is often recommended by doctors to patients who have back problems. All our class sizes are limited by the teachers and as the classes have all been running for some time members are beyond the 'beginner' stage. Therefore when there are vacancies, new members have to be at an intermediate level. Although we can't accommodate complete beginners within the U3A groups, sometimes we can help them find a suitable 'beginners course' from which they might be able to graduate later into a U3A group.

Last but not least, we have three **TAI CHI** groups. According to the NHS Choices web-site, studies have shown that Tai Chi can help people aged 65 and over to reduce stress, improve posture, balance and general mobility and increase muscle strength in the legs. In some ways like **PILATES, TAI CHI** combines deep breathing and relaxation with flowing movements, but the movements are performed standing. Again according to NHS Choices, it is ideal for inactive older people wanting to raise their activity levels gently and gradually.



All of the above groups have separate Group Coordinators and they all involve a payment to cover the costs of hall hire and in some cases the teacher but the details are very variable. If you think you might be interested in joining one of them, you can find details of when and where they meet on the Diary or on our web-site. After that it's a case of contacting the relevant Group Coordinator to move things forward.

(Apart from the exercising, many of the groups have social functions from time to time that usually involve eating and drinking !!)

Kath Hird

The River Stort in February Brisk Walkers



A winter walk on a dry sunny morning along a stretch of the Stort was just what a group of our Brisk Walkers enjoyed on the first Friday in February. At this time of year our river is quiet, that is to say, there were no narrowboats making way, the locks were tranquil, no canoeists were out on the water and just one man was seen fishing near Pig Lane. Apart from a small number of joggers or strollers, we had the towpath to ourselves for almost three hours until we reached the town. Fortunately for us, a fallen tree which had blocked the path at Southmill Lock following high winds in January been cleared away.

The spindly shapes of willows along the bank called to mind the words of Dorothy Wordsworth, sister of the poet, who wrote “O, thought !! What a beautiful thing God has made winter to be, stripping the trees, and letting us see their shapes and forms”.

Two pairs of swans were spotted, the first near the main road at Harlow Mill at the start of this seven and a half mile walk, the other pair close to Sawbridgeworth. At least, we think there were two pairs as none were spotted overtaking us as we made our way upriver.

No cycling

A bicycle that appeared to have been pulled from the river was propped against shrubbery on the bank. It gave rise to speculation about what had happened there. Will the owner be back for it? Then there was the sadness of a riverside shrine with several sprays of flowers. Another story lies behind that.

The stretch approaching Sawbridgeworth had rather a lot of litter spoiling the side of the towpath and not far beyond Station Road we came across a large abandoned item: a sizeable boat partially submerged and stuck at an angle of 45 degrees against the left bank. Just along from this spot there were deer tracks in the soft mud of the path, probably muntjac judging by the size of them.

Plenty of horn

What charmed us most was a small group of Highland cattle munching happily from sacks of what looked like potatoes. Most impressive was a young bull with a spectacular pair of long horns. Two of his companions were sporting but a single short horn. You could tell who was in charge there.

Aye, Konik

A flooded meadow reserved for some Polish Konik ponies was suitable only for ducks. There was not a single pony to be seen, but then, there was not much of the rough grass they eat available for them to feed on. These primitive horses are also used to graze the site at Rye Meads by the River Lee at Amwell, keeping it in good condition for wild flowers and much other wildlife, so perhaps another river walk is called for soon.

Richard Owen



Photo by Ian Thomas

Visit to Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds and town visit June 2018



The sun shone unexpectedly when around 30 of us took the short coach journey to Bury St Edmunds.

Up until then the weather had been pretty inclement obviously no one knew a heatwave was around the corner!

Most of us had pre booked to take a tour of the Grade 1 listed theatre built in 1819 by William Wilkins who also designed the National Gallery. It's uniquely the only National Trust owned theatre and the third oldest in the country. In 2007 it was completely refurbished back to the original Regency design. So now the seats, with the exception of the stalls (which were originally for the lower rungs of society) are arranged in boxes accommodating around six to eight people.



After welcoming tea and coffee in the Greene Room, with pleasant terraces which overlook Greene King's beer pipeline to its nearby bottling plant, Stephen the Duty Manager took us

around the theatre or should I say everywhere, both front of stage and backstage too. He emphasised the importance of maintaining the social hierarchy when the theatre was built and a visit to the theatre for the higher echelons of society was as much a chance to be seen as to enjoy the play.



A delightful number of Brexit-inspired pantomime dame costumes were on display, we saw an original wooden bench dating from when the theatre was built, we had the chance to 'perform' on stage which some of us did, and we even got to see inside Dame Judi Dench's dressing room which was very modest, welcoming and cosy. We had a couple of hours free to explore the town before the afternoon's performance.

I am always fascinated by the Abbey garden ruins, the great Abbey church is no more but what remains is rumoured to be haunted. The barons met here to formulate their demands to King John which subsequently resulted in Magna Carta. Two of the original churches fronting the boundary walls survive, St James which became St Edmundsbury cathedral, with the

relatively recent addition of a spire, and St Mary's which was new to me and where Mary Tudor, sister to Henry VIII and Queen of France is buried. It's also the memorial church to the East Anglian Regiment and one of the largest churches in the country.

Early afternoon saw us back at the theatre to enjoy 'Whisky Galore'.

This was excellent and very funny. The device was that an amateur dramatic company was putting on the play based on the book by Compton Mackenzie and the 1949 film. Having been in amateur dramatics some years back, I enjoyed the 'mistakes' where two people enter as the same character. The 'dog' was great too, especially when the dog exclaimed, 'I'm getting too old for this!'

Those who chose to spend the day around the town had a good time too. There is always a lot to see and do in Bury St Edmunds and we had the bonus of market day.

Carole Scott



A visit to the theatre is very much recommended even if you chose not to see a production and the tour is free to National Trust members or well worth the small cost.

We are Survivors (for those born before 1940)

We were born before TV, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, videos and the pill. We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens, before dishwashers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes...and before man walked on the moon.



We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can you be?). We thought “fast food” was what you ate in Lent, a “Big Mac” was an oversized raincoat and “crumpet” we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating and “sheltered accommodation” was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, artificial hearts, word processors, or young men wearing earrings. For us “time sharing” meant togetherness, a “chip” was a piece of wood or fried potato, “hardware” meant nuts and bolts, and “software” wasn’t a word.

Before 1940, “Made in Japan” meant junk, the term “making out” referred to how you did in your exams, “stud” was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and “going all the way” meant staying on a double decker bus to the terminus. In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, “grass” was mown, “coke” was kept in the coalhouse, a “joint” was a piece of meat you ate on Sundays and “pot” was something you cooked it in. “Rock music” was a fond mother’s lullaby, a “gay person” was the life and soul of the party, while “aids” just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder there is a generation gap today — but — by the Grace of God, we have survived!

Submitted by Jean Garrett

Liverpool and the Terracotta Army

On a bright early Sunday, 49 members gathered to meet the Lodges coach for our brief visit to Liverpool and surrounding areas. Stopping at the M6 Toll Road service area for a necessary coffee break we arrived in Liverpool around 1pm which gave us enough time to for a quick lunch before we kept our appointment with the Terracotta Army exhibition.

Liverpool is twinned with Shanghai so the ties between the cities are strong and reflect the historical connections of earlier times. But back to the exhibition, this is installed in the World Museum within the cultural district of the city alongside an impressive library complex. The exhibition which is continuing for a few more weeks consists of many artefacts that were recovered from the buried tombs. But as you would expect the main feature is of course the Terracotta life size figures of the soldiers who would guard the First Emperor of China: QIN SHI HUANG in the afterlife. From the items on display we could see he planned a comfortable secure life after death.



After our visit we checked in to the Radisson Blu for a meal and overnight stay.

On the Monday we embarked on a nonstop comprehensive tour of Liverpool with Paul, our Blue Badge guide. Our visits included Liverpool's two cathedrals with a guided tour of the Anglican building.

Next we moved on to the Beatles and visited two streets featured in two of their songs, Penny Lane and Strawberry Fields. We also saw the barbers they used. Some of our group paid a musical visit to the famous Beatles venue, the Cavern Club. Then we moved on to the newly redeveloped Royal Albert Dock area. This is a reclaimed old docks area now resplendent with new shops, eateries and tourist attractions including the Tate Gallery. It was now time for food so we proceeded to the Crosby area north of the city where all enjoyed the pre booked cream tea at the Royal Hotel.

To cap it all we went to the beach nearby to view the ANTONY GORMLEY installation "ANOTHER PLACE" This consisted of a hundred cast iron models of a man all installed on the shoreline and out to sea. Our visit was timed to see the figures were not all submerged and in fact one was near enough for most of us to "inspect" at close quarters.



Around 4pm we started our long journey home arriving around 9pm.

In summary a trip enjoyed by all with great planning in the capable hands of Vicky and Richard Cawse

Derek Francis

Bishop's Stortford U3A Annual Show 2018

The 24th U3A Annual Show took place at the Markwell Pavilion on August 21st and was once again a successful and enjoyable occasion.



Despite the cold, wet spring and the subsequent tropical summer, both of which made growing conditions challenging for gardeners, visitors were still able to admire a wonderful selection of fruit, vegetables, plants and flowers. See photograph on front cover.



Other exhibits included amazing photographs, stunning paintings, beautiful handicrafts and mouth-watering cakes and preserves.



Although the number of both exhibits and visitors were slightly down this year, the show still made a healthy profit, thanks in

part to the continued support of our sponsors, Aspen Electrical, Coopers of Bishop's Stortford, The Lemon Tree and Premier Travel, and a successful raffle.

Trophies and certificates were awarded at the end of the afternoon, with a new shield, named in honour of Beryl Jones, the founder member of Bishop's Stortford U3A, being awarded to Jeff Maguire for his hand carved wooden bowl (Best in Show – Arts and Crafts).

Other winners included Tony Forgione (Best in Show – Horticulture), Kathleen Milton (Banksian Medal), Hannah Shine (Olwen Memorial Bowl), Trevor McKenzie (John Moses Cup) and Janet Moody (Andrew Colebourne Cup).



Deborah Monkhouse
Annual Show Coordinator

London Explorer Group New River Walk – October 2018

It was a beautiful crisp sunny autumn morning when our group of 17 left Angel Underground Station and crossed the road to the Angel Pub for coffee.



Refreshed, we proceeded past the Claremont Square covered reservoir to the nearby Nautilus House Garden which overlooks the site of the New River Head. The impressive series of display boards pointed out remaining features of the site and gave an impression of how the River Head would have looked. The site had featured a large new reservoir, fed by the canal, called the “New River”, along with works to manage the supply of water to London. Taking four years, in 1614 the New River project was completed by Hugh Myddleton. The project had been commissioned by Parliament and King James 1 and was the first serious attempt by the authorities to improve the quality of London’s water. Previously, the main source of water had been the Thames which had become foul following a rapid increase in population during the Tudor era.

Thoroughly acquainted with the wonders of the New River project, we followed the lower reaches of New River course which has its source in Amwell near Hertford and follows the



contours of the land to Islington. Much of the river is now culverted and runs under modern roads and structures but some parts are covered by attractive linear parks with stretches retaining open water. As we proceeded, we passed sites of interest including the famous site of the Sadlers Wells Theatre which is now home to the Royal Ballet and English National Opera. With a long and chequered history, the site had in the past hosted more raucous forms of entertainment. Carrying on and having paid homage at the statue of Sir Hugh Myddleton on Islington Green, we consumed a hearty lunch at the nearby Bull pub. We found the New River course again from Essex Road and, taking our leave at Willow Bridge Road, headed for Highbury & Islington Underground. Along the way, we took in Canonbury with its notable Tower and Garden Square. Throughout, the weather was ideal for the Walk and the journeys into and out of London by train were without incident.

Peter Latham



Enjoying a hearty meal at the Bull pub



Weekly Walk and Monthly Amble Group



In **June** Christine Miller organised a walk for us in **Southwold** and seventeen walkers joined other U3A members who just wanted to enjoy a day at the seaside. The journey to Suffolk was initially delayed by roadworks taking place by Tesco's and then finished marginally quicker when the coach crawled behind an elderly man on his mobility scooter making his way slowly along the middle of the road in Southwold! A Ladies Cycle Race was finishing in the town an hour or two later and luckily we were able to reach our destination before the roads were closed. After lunch the walkers set off and were led down to the River Blyth and along Blackshore where we passed people enjoying something fishy at the Seafood Sheds. We then walked along the coast alongside the North Sea past numerous beach huts until we reached the Pier. For some the temptation to remain to enjoy the sea front or succumb to a Cream Tea was too much, but the rest of the hardy walkers continued on to complete the walk. All in all a lovely day out.



Sadly, however, this was to be the last Amble which Christine organised for us as she passed away unexpectedly in November 2018.

In **July** the Amble organised by Kath Hird set out from **Gilston**. After the heatwave everyone had been enduring it was a relief that temperatures had dropped which made walking that bit more enjoyable. Initially we had to negotiate our way half-a-mile uphill through a broad bean field. The farmer hadn't left a footpath and therefore we were walking on trampled broad bean plants, which obviously a lot of other people had walked on before us. The walk was almost entirely off-road and we enjoyed panoramic views over the countryside. The last part of the walk took us alongside the River Stort at Parndon Mill before returning to The Plume of Feathers for a lovely lunch.



Following another month of particularly hot weather, once again we were lucky that the temperature had dropped a degree or two when the **August** Amble organised by David Pearson set out from The White Horse in **Wareside**. The pre-lunch walk was through beautiful countryside with lovely views. The River Ash was crossed a couple of times and we wandered along disused railway track passing through Mardock Station which closed in 1964. Its old signal box has been preserved and can still be seen in the garden of a nearby house situated on the B1004. Back at The White Horse everyone had an enjoyable lunch.



Jeff Poynter led a group of over 20 walkers for an Amble in **September** starting out from The Three Horseshoes at **Spellbrook** and to where we returned for lunch. The walk crossed fields, through the large garden of a private house, over a stile where the adjoining electric fence was best avoided and back along the

banks of the River Stort passing Little Hallingbury Mill on the way. Another enjoyable Amble.

In **October** Ann Maguire organised an interesting and varied walk for us from **Much Hadham**. Having crossed the River Ash and walked through an uncultivated area of grass and wild flowers we were led uphill through beautiful woods with brilliant sunshine percolating through the trees. Eventually we found ourselves on a public right of way which passes in to the start of the Henry Moore Sculpture Park where a few sculptures can be seen 'for free!' A slow climb led past a farmyard where the sheep were gathered and there were a few murmurs of "mint sauce" and "Umm, lamb chops". A few sheep



dashed into their barn but ran out again; had they understood the comments? The walk eventually descended back to Much Hadham via the lower side of the woods where it was beginning to show signs of an early autumn and an enjoyable lunch was taken at The Bull.

On a sunny and warm **November** day Bob and Philippa Bishop took us for a beautiful walk starting out from the Prince of Wales in Brick End, **Broxted** – an added bonus being that there were no hills or stiles! We walked along country lanes, footpaths lined with trees and dappled with sunshine and shade, the edges of fields and through part of a golf course. Partial ground clearance had taken place and lots of golf balls were poking through the dislodged soil and lying around in the undergrowth, although there weren't so many to be seen once our group had passed through! Occasionally we stopped to gaze at the planes which were passing low down directly overhead as they made their final descent into Stansted Airport. We then returned to the pub to enjoy lunch together.



Each week, when an Amble is not taking place, Walks are led from Silver Leys by various members of the Group, sometimes taking footpaths through the local countryside and sometimes taking a variety of routes into and around town.

Valerie Porter
Group Coordinator

Genealogy/Family History Study Day

In July members of Bishop's Stortford U3A attended the Herts Network of U3As Genealogy/Family History Study Day at Woolmer Green to further their research knowledge and be able to apply it to their own family trees.



The morning's instruction was given by Ian Waller, who has over 30 years' experience of English research and has published several books in the "My Ancestor was a" series. He assumed everyone was familiar with civil registration, parish and census records. His emphasis was placed on looking elsewhere at electoral rolls, the many different directories, education and employment records (e.g. Warwick University's collection of Trade Union records), newspapers etc. etc. He highlighted visiting the area your ancestors originally came from as many hamlets, villages and towns have their own local history groups in addition to the local record office. Even individuals in an area such as the priest or publican may be able to supply information.

The afternoon concentrated on DNA testing in some detail. It was led by Donna Rutherford, a New Zealander with a UK ancestry, who works in technology. After taking an Ancestry DNA test in 2015, she immersed herself in learning about DNA for genealogy. After explaining how genes are passed from parents to offspring, her talk covered aspects of Autosomal DNA and how the results are used to connect cousins who share a common ancestor. (Autosomal DNA is a term used to describe DNA, which is inherited from chromosomes other than the sex chromosomes.) She ended by explaining the 5 different tests and which one was best for genealogists and how all are rapidly advancing as they become able to make more comparisons.

Anyone interested in Donna's work should simply visit her website, donnarutherford.com, where she explains everything in detail.

Dave Blanchflower

Brisk Walks on the Jurassic Coast October Holiday



Three and a half days of testing walks on the Isle of Purbeck were lined up for a party from the Friday Brisk Walks group. We were extremely fortunate to have dry, and, on most days, very warm weather with good visibility for the walks, planned by Mick and Jan Scott. This was just what we needed for maximum enjoyment of the coastal path with its splendid views stretching west to Portland Bill and east to the Isle of Wight.



The near-perfect circle of Lulworth Cove lays just a few hundred yards stroll from our base at West Lulworth House belonging to HF Holidays. The taster walk for some of the group on the first afternoon was anything but a stroll, as it kicked off with a route past the spectacular Stair Hole, a world heritage site, followed by a stiff circuit from the cove with a tough climb up steps to Bindon Hill.

Rock follies

Follies featured on the first full day's walk. We stopped near one overlooking the black clay of Kimmeridge Bay with its oil well opposite, noting that the nodding donkey was static. Clavell Tower today stands close to the cliff edge and had it not been moved some yards inland would surely have fallen into the sea. This coastal lookout and folly was built in 1830/31 by the eponymous rector and landowner when he came into the land and a lot of money.

After a stretch of coast path high above Kimmeridge Ledges the group turned inland to be faced shortly afterwards with the steepest climbs imaginable. The way up was by rough steps cut into the hillside before a welcome break on top of Swyre Head 203 metres above sea level. Phew! The return route along

Ridgeway Hill took us past the listed Grange Arch, or Creech Folly, built in 1746 in the form of a triple arch of ashlar stone overlooking Creech Grange far below.



Chuffed

After a 13 mile trek, the longest of the holiday, we were very pleased to sit down and let the restored steam train take the strain for a ride back from Swanage to Corfe Castle. The group had opted not to take a section of coast path with three steep descents and ascents, one of which has 200 steps each side. Instead, we chose a level track leading to St Aldhelm's or St Alban's head with its working coastguard lookout and the tiny 800 year old St Aldhelm's Chapel. The disused Winspit quarry on the coast near Worth Matravers provided a convenient site for our lunch break. There we sat in the large open space on the floor of the quarry where once nature had provided solid rock.



PT cruiser

To finish we had a shorter walk but it still tested us as the ascents and descents were exceptionally steep, especially the climb up to another Swyre Head after we had passed the famous stone arch of Durdle Door. As we paused for breath we were overtaken by a couple of runners, a younger man and a woman, who cruised past

us. In some amazement we watched as they both stopped halfway up the 45 degree hill for a minute or two of calisthenics before continuing their run.

Stars in their eyes

Most evenings we enjoyed some form of entertainment put on by the HF team, including the customary quiz, plus a live performance of local songs and rhymes by John Sartin, an original member of the Yetties folk group. One clear evening a few of us took advantage of the dark skies of the Dorset coast to go down to the cove to gaze at the uncountable stars.

Our thanks go to Mick and Jan for leading the walks and to Penny Mayo for handling the bookings with practised efficiency.

Richard Owen

Photographs by Peter Bass, Jenny Mayo and Stephanie McDowell

Plants and Gardens



Man to florist: "I'd like a bunch of flowers, please.'

Florist: "Certainly, sir. What flowers would you like?"

Man: "Er. I'm not sure'

Florist: "Let me help you sir - what exactly have you done?"

Poetry Corner



On the Fringe

I'm on the fringe – I like it here
I hop about from ear to ear
I hop around from 'ere to there
And suck the blood beneath the hair

My life is great – I don't keep still
Of nice red blood I get my fill
I'm not too fussy where I go
- On any part the humans show



I watch them scratch I dance with glee
They cannot tell where I might be
I slide below I leap above
To suck the plasma that I love

I sit here with my fellow flea
We bite in perfect harmony
We love to cause those little lumps
That turn into red itchy bumps



We dance and dance between them still
Until we've really had our fill
Then lie at ease among the hair
And put our tootsies in the air

Oh how I really love to be
A skipping nipping human flea
Then in the fringe I hide away
To rest until another day

Adrienne Tinn

IRISH PHILOSOPHY

There are only two things to worry about
either you are well or you are sick.

If you are well,
then there is nothing to worry about.

If you are sick,
there are two things to worry about.
Either you will get well or you will die.

If you get well,
there is nothing to worry about.

If you die,
there are two things to worry about.
Either you will go to heaven or hell.

If you go to heaven,
there is nothing to worry about.

But if you go to hell,
you'll be so damn busy shaking hands
with your friends.

You wont have time to **WORRY!!**

Wow! This looks interesting!



Learning Not Lonely.

Living life, expanding horizons, challenging conventions.

Much of the public debate on ageing is predicated on a deficit and dependency approach. The U3A model offers an alternative ageing experience, which is built on shared learning, skill sharing and volunteering.

The evidence from this research demonstrates the value of mutual aid and of reciprocity to confidence, self-esteem, and wellbeing. More importantly it demonstrates the value of communities of interest that are not defined by age, or by past experience, but instead are defined by the experiences still to be explored.

The model is low cost, defined by participants, and learner-led. It is not dependent on state funding; it has a life and existence of its own. It has a contribution to make to the loneliness debate, and to the ageing well debate. It has been quietly and continually making an impact in communities across the United Kingdom. 420,000 people have the U3A as part of their lived experience. The value of these volunteer-led organisations is significant.

Finally, the words of this contributor define the impact of this movement. “When you have worked all your life, how do you fill your life? You could sit within four walls...instead I have found friendships and new experiences, experiences that I would never ever have thought I had the chance to do...”

Submitted by Jeff Poynter

MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses)

I can only comment on **Futurelearn** and I only found out about this on a visit to the Open University (OU). As an OU graduate I had never visited the campus which doesn't really have any students, so 20 years later I did!



Futurelearn then is a platform part hosted by the OU. It's international but usually presented in English. Quite a number of universities host courses; I have enrolled in subjects from Exeter, Glasgow and Dublin for example, but if I chose a course from the Netherlands I could be confident that it would be delivered in English.

It is entirely free. There is no catch.

To sign up all you need is an email address and password. What's in it for them? I think they hope you might take on a degree or post degree course from them which of course you have to pay for.

If you really want to you can buy a certificate at the end of the course which costs something over £30. At this stage to be honest I don't see the point! Learning is multimedia via mini lectures and videos sometimes live talk-ins and you are encouraged to engage with other students online. There may be 'quizzes' at the end of each week but no essays.

Courses typically run from 3 to 6 weeks with study time of around 2 to 4 hours a week.

There is a cut off time to start and finish but it depends on the university - some keep access open for a long time after this.

I have studied or part studied (which is mainly the case) the following:

Strategies for successful ageing

This complemented a lot of the U3A ethos. I liked this although of course as it's run by academics it's a bit worthy and could have perhaps been a little condensed.

Empire

I didn't get on with this one. Although I love history I did find it assumed quite a lot of prior knowledge.

Propaganda and Ideologies in Everyday Life.

I didn't get far with this at all, not that I didn't want to as I studied social science; it's just that I didn't then have the time!

In the night sky - Orion.

I loved the bits I could understand before it got too scientific for me! I learnt that the brightest star top left is called Betelgeuse and perhaps counter intuitively red stars are 'cold' whereas blue stars are 'hot'.

World War 1 Paris 1919

This was my first and my favourite course. I really liked the leader too. He was a German professor of International Relations at Glasgow University. That was an interesting position to lead from and unlike some of the academics on other courses I found him very modest. I learnt that there were a number of treaties not just Versailles which I knew about. Interestingly some of the outcomes of the war help to explain the background to some of the world affairs and conflicts today.

That's about it in a nutshell. I suggest if you want to know more just have a look around the **Futurelearn** website and look at the subject list, some are vocational many are not.

I gather other institutions host MOOC; rumour has it even Harvard but I haven't explored this.

Carole Scott

If you have any experience of MOOCs then please let us know how you got on. It would be interesting and of help to others.

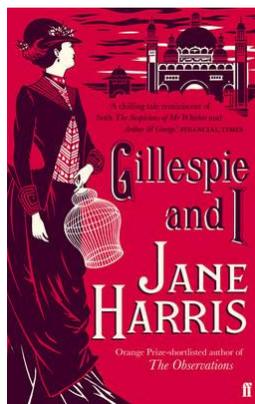
Book Corner Book Group Recommendations

Gillespie and I by Jane Harris

This novel is very unusual: the first person narrator is unappealing and the resolution is unexpected and odd.

The story begins in Glasgow at the time of the International Exhibition of 1888 and the Gillespie of the title is a struggling artist.

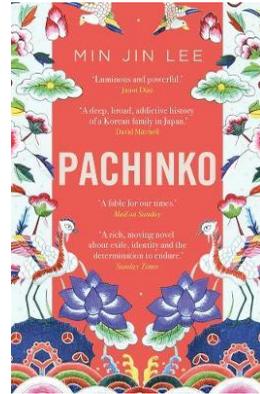
The narrator insinuates herself into his household in an attempt to get close to him. There is much to discuss as the plot develops and the ending is enigmatic.



Rosemary Boa, Book Group 3

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee

This is a very unusual book which incorporates quite a lot of historical facts within the story of a Korean family who lived in Japan. We found it a compelling read which dealt with the difficulties experienced over four generations by a family living among the Japanese. Pachinko is a form of gambling which was generally used by the criminal society to fund their activities, and was one of the few enterprises which the often shunned Koreans could make money from. The book offers an absorbing insight into life for Korean immigrants, which is far from easy even up to the present day.

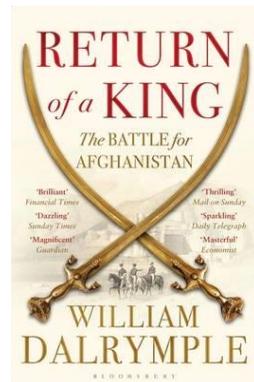


Ruth Rawlinson, Book Group 4

Return of a King by William Dalrymple

This non-fiction book is about the battle for Afghanistan and gives an account of the first Anglo-Afghan war from 1839 to 1842. Our group was quite amazed by some of the detail. This was a bloody, brutal part of history which took place in a hostile environment. It has to be said; the British did not always come out in a good light.

The book certainly improved our knowledge, although it was not always easy reading.



Sue McEvoy, Book Group 6

Look out for more book recommendations in the next newsletter.



Our USA Ethos



Bishop's Stortford USA

Is a self help organisation run entirely by volunteers, relying on everyone making a contribution of some kind.

We look to members to give time and effort as well as to receive the informal learning, enjoyment and friendship that the various activities provide. Our USA can only thrive if all members accept this principle.

A new group only comes about when a member expresses an interest in a particular area and others join to form the group and run it themselves with support from the committee.

Everyone can play some part in our USA, whether it be leading or taking an active part in a group, serving on the committee or volunteering to help in some other capacity.

Courtesy & Common Sense Reminders

For USA Group Members

The USA is run by volunteers who give their own time freely for the benefit of our groups so:

Please

Take note of the organiser's phone number and/or email address in order to

let the leader know if you are unable to attend a meeting.

Let the leader know if you wish to leave the group, as there may be a waiting list.

If you miss **three sessions** in a row without contacting the leader, it will be assumed that you no longer wish to be a member of that group.

Arrive at the group meetings in good time.

Make a note of meeting dates and times.

Remember that individual groups are self-funding, so contributions may be requested when there are expenses to be covered.

Thank you

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