



Cambourne & District u3a

Bulletin February 2024

Issue No. 61



Robbie Burns

It's late January and pictures come in on the family what's app of Burns' suppers. My grandson sends the first picture of the haggis with tatties and neeps he has cooked with his girlfriend up in Leeds. Meanwhile, another comes in from Winchester. All chose vegetarian haggis because they are vegetarian or as the saying goes -haggis is a braw dish just dinnea ask what's in it.



Burns left a huge legacy; not just the supper of course, but a worldwide recognition of the beauty of his poems and songs. He was translated into Russian and Chinese who used him in their various revolutions as an example of the intellectual peasant farmer. (useful when the Chinese wanted to force such people onto the land during the Cultural revolution)

However, it was his influence on other writers that marks him out as a true Bard. The Romantic poets like Keats and the Cambridge educated Coleridge and Wordsworth, made pilgrimages to his cottage in Ayrshire. Burns' father was a tenant farmer who tried to give his son a good education, hiring a graduate at times, but there was always money troubles that followed Burns throughout his life. As did his many children, both in and out of wedlock.

But yet he could write in both his Scottish dialect and in Enlightenment English. (eg first 2 verses of To a Mouse) He was well read and accumulated a huge library of books. His influence on other writers extended to modern times. Great poets like Seamus Heaney and American writers from Walt Whitman to Maya Angelou, admired and were influenced by his work. John Steinbeck's of Mice and Men written about his experience in the Great Depression, takes its title from Burns' To a Mouse. 'The best laid schemes o' mice and men/ gang aft a-gley. Burns in turn was said to be influenced by folk songs and stories similar to those his mother sang. And no doubt contemporary writers.

In such a divided, troubled world perhaps one of the most hopeful quotes from a Burns' poem/song to end with is the last verse of A man's a man for a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
(As come it will for a' that,)
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That Man to Man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

Best wishes

Kath

EDITORIAL

This month's cover shows a remarkable pastel drawing of Helen Mirren by u3a member Jennie Browne. The portrait was taken from a magazine photo rather than real life, but the artist has managed to retain features of Helen Mirren which show her age; both the neck and the hands often give away the age of someone who otherwise looks remarkably young.

Thanks to Christine Tyler for the list of forthcoming talks opposite. Please note that there have been some changes since the publication of the list last month.

The Art appreciation group would welcome new members. See pages 6 and 7 and also more details on page 8.

Also on page 8 are three book reviews from Kath. Thanks for these. Good to show that book reviews do not have to be pages long. I really appreciate recommendations from other people so I shall look forward to reading the Annie Ernaux. I hear on the grapevine that one of our bookgroups is reading 'Lessons in Chemistry' next. How about a review for the newsletter. [I loved it!]

All contributions welcome. Deadline : the end of the month.

Peter

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FORTHCOMING TALKS

Date	Speaker	Subject
16/2/24	Joanna Bogle	Sue Ryder: A remarkable life
.15/3/24	Stephen Bown	Chase Africa (Community Health and Sustainable Environment)
19/4/24	Ian Cameron	East Anglia and the Danelaw
17/5/24	Bobbie Darbyshire	A beginning, a muddle and an end – Where do novelists get their ideas from?
21/6/24	David Short	Tales from the Queen’s Head, Newton
19/7/24	David Horan	Visit to Chernobyl – What remains?
16/8/24	Summer Break	
20/9/24	Graham Bruce	Trip to the American Great Lakes, Minnesota and the Battle of Little Bighorn
18/10/24	Tony Tutton	The life, music and Influence of Buddy Holly
15/11/24	Joanna Bogle	Winter Feasts and Celebrations
20/12/24		Christmas celebration

Need help with risk assessments for u3a activities /outings etc? Wendy Park will help or advise.

Contact Wendy : fwendypark@aol.com

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COMING UP THIS WEEK

On Thursday 8th Feb at 2pm the Art appreciation group meet to discuss the work of Marc Chagall. Below, his peace window at the United Nations. What could be more poignant in these uncertain times? And opposite, his self portrait, but did he really have seven fingers on his left hand? Join us on Thursday to find out!

More details from pccornwell@icloud.com





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Art Appreciation

This study group started life as the Twentieth Century Art group, because of an expression of interest in the subject by a couple of members. It has now evolved from being primarily focussed on art from the twentieth century, to a much broader look at art in all its form and periods.

This often takes the form of visits and revisits to galleries, museums and even University colleges, both locally and further afield. Also, members take turns, if they wish, to research a specific artist and make a short presentation to the rest of the group. For this term the artists include Marc Chagall, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Frieda Kahlo. This provides an exciting insight into artists of whom we may know very little, and gives an opportunity to look at their art works.

If you are at all interested in appreciating different art styles and artists, or thinking about how to look at these things differently, you are very welcome to join this lively group. Please get in touch with me at fran@panrucker.co.uk

Audiobooks on Radio 4 sounds

The Years by Annie Ernaux

This is the best book I've listened to for a while. I haven't read any books by this French author, but this well lauded memoir is an amazing story from her birth in 1940 to 2006.

It was praised for her capture of the wider cultural scene and people in the telling of her own personal experience. This is the history of someone living in Paris, yet there are events that illuminated the world stage that we would all recognise. For example the student revolt which started in the suburbs of Paris in 1968. This memoir glides through the decades -beautifully written and certainly not small scale domestic.

The Wager by David Grann

David Grann is another prize winning, non fiction writer whose book Killers of the Flower moon, has been made into a film by Martin Scorsese. This book is the story of the British warship HMS Wager which in 1741, sets off with four other ships, on a secret mission in pursuit of a treasure laden, Spanish galleon. It is a gripping tale with twists and turns to keep you transfixed. By the time they reach the wild, stormy Cape Horn, you are familiar with the characters and their less than easy journey to get there. (storms, scurvy, typhus etc) The inevitable shipwreck occurs on an island off Southern Chile and this is where the maritime rules begin to fray and mutiny and savagery emerge. One of the survivors was 16 year old Midshipman John Byron, the grandfather of Lord Byron the poet. A brilliant book and Scorsese has the film rights.

Miss Buncle's book

A far more genteel look at life in an English village published in the 1930's by the Scottish writer D.E. Stevenson Miss Buncle is enduring hard times as a single woman in her late 30's and decides to write a book about her village, Silverstream. Once the villagers read it, they are keen to identify who amongst them is the author. Unlike an Agatha Christie tale, there are no murders committed in pursuit of this knowledge, rather it is a witty and charming who done it.

Kath

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Interest Groups and leaders

Richard Davies -World War Ii

Sandra Davies - Theatre Group

Anne Jones -Get to know your I pad

Jeff Jones -Genealogy

Louise Kershaw – Book club 1

Janet Leonard -Book club 3 Walking group

Colin Norman -Bridge Club

Fran Panrucker -Allsorts Art Appreciation Book club 2

Dance fitness

Christine Tyler -French Intermediate

Lesley Woodger – Out to Lunch Gardens Galore

Contact group leaders through the Website

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