

*The colours of the flowers, the bees being busy, the enchanting bird song and maybe a glass of something refreshing, while relaxing in the garden .....what's not to love about summer!*

*A very warm welcome to new members:  
Gail Hamilton, Carol Brandrick*

Above photos were taken by members of the Digital Photography Group at Arrow Valley Country Park– more further on.



Welcome to this edition of our news roundup from across the groups. Can I first thank all those who attended the Annual General Meeting. Your support

exceeded my expectations and we had therefore a working quorum and this, together with the email votes, meant that over 33% of the membership took part in the selection process for the Committee.

I must thank Sue Cook for her work as our Chair for the last twelve months and the outgoing members of the Committee. On a similar note, can I also especially thank Val Hawley for her work for first setting up our u3a and steering it through the past 11 years to become the success it is today. Over the years Droitwich u3a has had over 1000 members, all that have benefited from the activities and friendships that have ensued. Our current membership is close to 500 and I know your new Committee will work to ensure that these activities and friendships continue to develop. Our strength is our current membership, our Group Leaders and those members that have put themselves forward to become Committee Members. My personal thanks to Anne Everard, Geoff Stollard, Sue Ackrill and Barry Tait for putting their names forward and being subsequently elected as new Committee members and of course Carole Smallwood, Les Hazlewood and Paul Lynskey for their continuing service. In closing this part of the newsletter, I should also thank Dorothy Colman who edits our newsletter and Liz and Malcolm Ross our Website Administrators.

For my part I thank you for putting your trust in me as Chair. I stand on the shoulders of all those that have gone before and I hope to serve you as well. I will get around many of the groups as the year progresses; in the meantime I

am available on email and the phone to discuss and hopefully resolve any challenges you have as members of our u3a.

'Friendships Remembered' is how we will mark members of our u3a who have passed:

*Pat Heap*

*Alan Bishop*

*Malcolm Rosamond*

*Our sympathies go to their family members and friends.*

Friendships Remembered can only work with your help; can I therefore ask you to let Barry Tait, Membership Secretary, Les Hazlewood or myself know please if you are aware of the passing of a former or current member.

Tickets are still available for the barn dance on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Last year's event was great fun and I am sure this year will be the same. This year's Strawberry Tea on 21<sup>st</sup> August will be a ticketed event and like last year I am sure there will be an excellent turnout. Tickets to both events are available from Carole Smallwood (carolesmallwood@hotmail.co.uk) I trust you will have a great summer and we will see you all in September.

*Mike Bracey*

*Droitwich Spa and District Chair*

### **New Group Co-ordinators**

Following our successful Annual General Meeting in June I have been able to step down from the committee and am pleased to announce that Anne Everard and Sue Ackrill will be taking over the roles of Existing Groups Co-ordinator and New Group Co-ordinator respectively. It will be good to have fresh committee members with new ideas to keep our organisation dynamic and forward looking. I know they will have different ideas on how this can be done.

If any members care to look at the Cotswold Link u3a website, or indeed the West Midlands u3a website and browse through all the Groups' pages of the member u3as they will soon find the great diversity of activities that are being undertaken.

There is no reason why if a few members are prepared to get together and start a group that we couldn't expand our range of groups. My only caveat being that if a member wants a new activity they should be prepared, at least initially, to be the point of contact, or in our terminology the group leader. I understand that not all members feel confident to undertake this role but there is lots of help available from your committee as well as from other group leaders and the task is really not too onerous.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the groups that I have visited over the past few months for welcoming me to their meeting and listening to my pleas for new committee members. I wish all our groups continued success.

*Gay Enoch – Hon. President*



### Spotlight on the Groups

#### *Local History Group*

Like some other groups, we are having a summer break. Our penultimate meeting in April was a visit to Tudor House Museum which was fascinating. A few of us hadn't been for many years and we were impressed by the transformation since then. It was far more family friendly from how I remember it all those years ago. We had a wonderful guide who was very informative – well worth a visit, ideal for school holidays!

Thank you to Anne Owen for organising it and arranging the refreshments provided at the museum.

Our first Autumn meeting will be held at Droitwich library(gallery) on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 10am and thereafter every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month at a venue to be arranged. Jeff Gogarty is the leader and it is hoped that we will start off by having an informal chat/exchanging of ideas about how the group can progress in respect of research projects etc, whether they be bite-size or even larger! The group would love to welcome anyone who is interested in finding out more so please come along on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Contact Jeff at [jeffgogarty@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jeffgogarty@yahoo.co.uk)

#### *Garden Lovers' Group*

The newly formed Garden Lovers group have enjoyed visits to Whitlenge and to White Cottage Gardens. We shall be visiting Badge Court in July and Westacres in August. We usually arrange the visits for the morning of the first Wednesday of the month.

Please contact Elizabeth at [ef.bartle@me.com](mailto:ef.bartle@me.com) if you are interested in joining this group

#### *The Gallivanterers*

The WHO ended its declaration of Covid-19 being a global health emergency on 5th May 2023 and on 9th May the Gallivanterers celebrated with their first post Covid jaunt to Forge Mill Needle Museum & Bordesley Abbey.

We were guided expertly around the medieval ruins of a once a thriving Cistercian Abbey which was in existence for 400 years from 1138 to 1538 when it was destroyed by Henry 8th during the Dissolution. After coffee & cake we had a very informative tour of the needle museum. On the drive there we had been bemoaning the state of the country but on the drive back we were pleased that we had been born in the 1940s and not the 1840s as not being aristocratic we

could well have had to work in the hideous circumstances that the museum demonstrated. The museum told the fascinating & sometime gruesome story of needle making in Victorian times. The Mill is a listed building which houses original water-powered machinery and for many years Redditch dominated the world needle trade. Being a Needle Museum they also had a marvellous textile exhibition.



*Bridge Beginners Group*

We are now taking names for the next occurrence of this group which will operate as a course running from October 2023 to March 2024 inclusive, with the 2-hour meetings being held weekly on a day to be agreed between the members. The course is suitable for members who are complete novices to the game of Bridge or who may have played some time ago and forgotten most of what they once knew.

With the passing of Covid let's hope this is just the first of many more Gallivants.

By Jan Skan



If you read the small print they were manufactured at the Needle Factory in Redditch



The remains of Bordesley Abbey



An interesting day out at Forge Mill Needle Museum & Bordesley Abbey

*From u3a Facebook page:*

The U3A Droitwich Wind Instrument Group (DWIG) adopted a new persona as "The Village Band" to face the challenge of playing Forties



music on an occasional bumpy, moving train between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth on one afternoon and two mornings for the Severn Valley Railway's Forties Weekends.

Photo courtesy of Tony Carwithen, Unofficial Severn Valley Facebook Group

Bridge is a 'whist-like' card game for 4 players operating as two teams/pairs, who sit opposite each other. The game consists of two main parts. Firstly, the bidding - where players compete to decide on a contract where one pair aim to take a specified number of tricks, with a specified suit as trumps (or with no trumps). Secondly, the play - where the pair that won the contract then try to make at least the specified number of tricks.

Starting from the absolute basics the course will cover the main features of Acol (the most commonly used bidding system), and some techniques of card play. Familiarity with "whist-like" card games would be an advantage but is not essential.

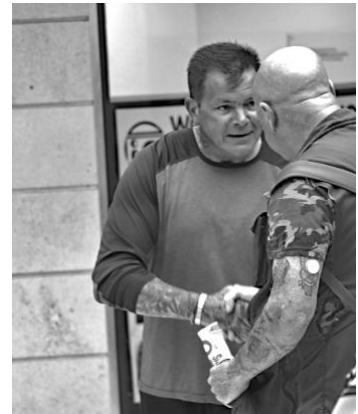
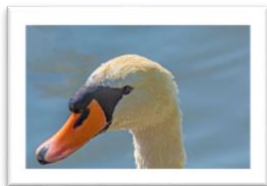
For more information or to sign-up for the next course please contact the group leader by email via the Droitwich U3A website, or phone on 01905 796201

Les Hazlewood

**Digital Photography Group**

The group recently visited the Arrow Valley Country Park with a theme of nature and wildlife.

Arrow Valley Country Park is a country park on the River Arrow at Redditch, built by Redditch Development Corporation in the 1970s. It has 900 acres of public open space and incorporates the 27 acres Arrow Valley Lake, popular for dinghy sailing, fishing and birdwatching.



A Spring visit to Alcester:



Worcester city centre with the theme "Street Photography"

To join our group contact Alan Meyrick at [alanmeyrick@btinternet.com](mailto:alanmeyrick@btinternet.com)

Calendar dates

Monthly meetings/talks held  
at The Norbury Theatre 2.30pm  
3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month  
No meetings in July and August

**Summer Events:**

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July: Barn Dance - Hampton Lovett  
parish rooms at 7pm-10pm

Music provided by Herbal Remedy with buffet  
included

Contact Carole Smallwood for tickets

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August: Strawberry tea - at Droitwich  
Methodist Hall at 2pm



*Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter and thank you to all who have contributed along with some terrific photos!*

*The next newsletter will be published in September so please submit any articles/photos to the editor via the website or email to [dorothy\\_colman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dorothy_colman@yahoo.co.uk) by **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September***

***Please consider sending a few words (and photo if possible) about your group or even something that you think would interest other members – just a single paragraph would suffice – this is your newsletter!***

*Editor*

*And finally.....*



What an entertaining afternoon, courtesy of Aelfgythe Morris Dancers, we were treated to following the AGM!

There are one or two familiar faces who were cajoled into joining in the demo on stage. Well done – you all gave a very impressive display!