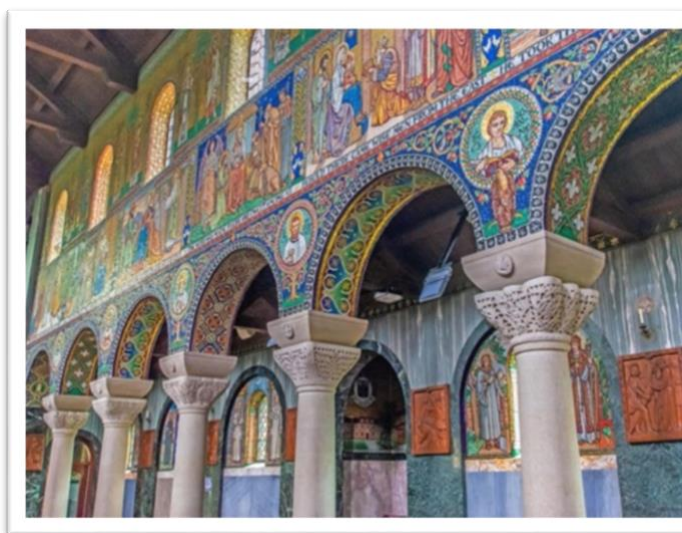




The Digital Photography Group recently visited the Church of The Sacred Heart and Saint Catherine of Alexandria at Droitwich Spa.

Built in brick, in 1919/21, in the style of an early Christian basilica. The design for this church is based on the Basilicas of Ravenna in Italy. It replaced a much smaller building of 1909 on the same site. The architect was F Barry Peacock FRIBA. Sacred Heart is especially well known for its mosaics which cover every wall space above dado level. They were designed by Gabriel Joseph Pippet and the work was executed by mosaic experts Maurice Josey and Fred Oates in a continuous 10 year period from 1922.



More photos further on



Can I first welcome any new members that have joined us since the last newsletter.

Well, here we are at the beginning of September and another u3a year in front of us but let's not close Summer down just yet. We held the Strawberry Tea event; it was good to see the 80 odd members that attended, an extremely good afternoon it was. I was on the table that won the quiz; I would like to say I played a critical role in that success but that would be far from the truth!! I would like to thank Pam Douglas for setting the quiz and Carole Smallwood and her helpers for all the work involved in organising the event.

We have our first monthly meeting at the Norbury Theatre on Monday 18th September about China in Six Objects by H.J. Colston-Inge of the Worcester Chinese Association. Geoff Stollard has recently taken over organising speakers for these events and he and I would like to hear your ideas for future talks. We have two taster sessions coming up over the next couple of months. One is Walking Tennis at the Lido Park and the second is Line Dancing at Salwarpe. More on these in the next few weeks via email.

We are again holding an Open Afternoon event on 9th October 2.00 to 4.00pm at the Community Hall Heritage Way WR9 8YB. The event is open to both members and the public, so please bring a friend.

The event will celebrate our u3a and showcase to potentially new members the diversity of interest groups we have to offer and perhaps develop with your help. I look forward to seeing you there.

Without you our u3a would be nothing so please take advantage of the existing groups, suggest new groups but most of all Learn, Laugh, Live.

*Mike Bracey
Droitwich Spa and District Chair*

Events Update

Barn Dance 22nd July 2023

The Barn Dance was a huge success again this year and the band members of *Herbal Remedy* were very impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of those attending. Everyone threw themselves into the dancing and many were glad of a break for a while when the food was served. After supper the dancing resumed and everyone had a really enjoyable evening. If laughter is the best medicine, then everyone had a good dose of it that night!

The caller had travelled from Burton-on-Trent especially for us, but I think that this may well have been the last time we see Jeff. The band, being U3A members, are willing to play on a regular basis if we would like to form a Barn Dancing Group, but the problem is that they do not have a regular caller now that Jeff has moved to Burton. If any member knows of a person who could act as a caller, perhaps they would let Sue Ackrill, the New Groups' Co-ordinator know. If anyone would be prepared to train as a caller, Ron from *Herbal Remedy* would be happy to chat about what is involved with calling dances. He has several books of Barn Dance tunes, which include all the calls and movements. He and Fiona have been playing for Barn Dances since 1982, so have a wealth of experience and are prepared to offer lots of support to us.

Thanks to those people who helped to set up the room beforehand and to leave everything neat and tidy at the end of the evening.

Strawberry Tea 21st August 2023

This event was very crowded last year, with too many members squashed into one room, and there were some complaints. Committee made the decision to open both rooms so that everyone could spread out. This was the answer to the problem, along with putting question sheets on tables, rather than pinning them to the walls, so there was no need for members to move around the room other than to get their tea and cake. The Quiz itself was easier this year than last, although not easy by any means. We have some very clever people in U3A! More members than ever attended – 20 more than our highest number previously – and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. Thanks to the members who helped to set up the rooms and also to the ladies who helped in the kitchen and tidied up afterwards. Your help was much appreciated.

Open Afternoon in October

Following the success of the Open Afternoon last year and the new members gained from that event, Committee is hoping to hold another in October. Plans have yet to be made, as Committee does not meet from July until September. You will be advised in due course if and when this is going to go ahead.

Carole Smallwood, Social Secretary

Spotlight on the Groups

The Wednesday Visit Gardens Group recently visited Pear Tree Cottage, Wichenford.



The Digital Photography Group recently visited the Church and village of Feckenham. The village lies on the B4090 road which used to be the ancient Saltway Track between Alcester and Droitwich. The village once stood in the middle of the ancient Royal Forest of Feckenham. The area was a substantial forest covering much of Worcestershire, and was used by Norman royalty for hunting. In the Middle Ages, Feckenham was the administrative centre for the royal forest; and it grew into a thriving town while today's nearby large town of Redditch was still a small village. The forest court and prison building were

located near the centre of the village, in an area now used as a sports ground.

The village was visited by all the early kings of England, who had a lodge in the park of Feckenham Manor. Several entries in Pipe Rolls and Patent Rolls between the years 1166 and 1169 relate to the repair of the king's houses in the manor, and there was a royal hunting lodge near the village. The remains of one ancient hunting lodge are believed to lie beneath the village recreation ground.



After the session we retired to the community run shop/cafe for coffee and home made cakes.



On a damp and overcast morning the Digital Photography Group visited Diglis Basin and Marina.

Diglis Basin is where the Worcester and Birmingham Canal meets the awesome River Severn. It's a great starting point for exploring the canal and river.

Before being renovated the area was where the larger river boats unloaded their cargos onto the narrowboats that would then use the Birmingham-Worcester canal. In this way, goods could make their way by water all the way from the larger docks at Gloucester all the way to the city of Birmingham and beyond.

Today the area is a smart canal-boat marina with sights to see and places to eat including one that is served by a floating café. At any time there are usually more than 50 vessels docked in the basin. Boat trips and excursions are available, particularly during the summer months. A series of locks connect the marina basin to the River Severn and walking paths run along the banks all the way into the city and Worcester Bridge. To the south of Diglis Marina are the Diglis river-locks – said to be the one of the largest and deepest of their type in the country – as well as the recently built Diglis Pedestrian Bridge. From the edge of the Marina there are exceptional views of the River as it flows past the medieval cathedral.

The whole marina region has become popular with cyclists, dog walkers and outdoor enthusiasts. This is definitely a little known gem to visit and a fantastic example of canal regeneration.



And finally...the Digital Photographic Group recently visited the Worcestershire village of Inkberrow. The village is often thought to be the model for Ambridge, the setting of BBC Radio 4's long-running series The Archers. In Particular, The Bull, the fictional Ambridge pub, is supposed to be based on The Old Bull at Inkberrow. The village's parish church is dedicated to St. Peter and contains the Savage family chapel.

In 2006, Inkberrow was awarded the title of Worcestershire Village of the year and won the Building Community Life section of the competition.

Inkberrow Millennium Green is a site whose history is lost in the mists of late mediaeval England. Its main feature is a well preserved moat surrounding an island thought probably to have had a dwelling at one time but now wooded together with two mediaeval fish ponds.

In addition much of the site features “ridge and furrow”, a land pattern common across much of the English Midlands, formed by Ox ploughing in the Middle Ages.



Maths, Science & Technology (MST) Group.

Our meetings are open to all Droitwich u3a members. They are held on the third Friday of most months from September to Spring. We meet at Rotary House, Corbett Avenue at 10 am for coffee/tea and chat. The talk starts at 10.30am
Dates & details below. £2.50 including coffee/tea & biscuit.

As the September topic may be a popular one, please contact us via the website to book a place. Preference will be given to members who have already attended an MST meeting. Alan & Gerard are willing to do a repeat talk at a later date.

Catherine & Roger Bach

September 15th	Getting the best out of your mobile phone as a camera.
October 20th	The Rewarding Brain
November 17th	The Role of Semi-conductors in today's electric revolution.
December 15th	The Star of Bethlehem (Astronomy)
January 2024	No meeting
February 16 th	The Wonderful World of Parasites!!
March 15th	Medical Imaging
April 19th	More Fascinating Parasites?

To join our group contact Alan Meyrick at alanmeyrick@btinternet.com



Wine Appreciation Group

A baker's dozen of the group had a most convivial meeting in Rotary House at 6:30 on 23rd August to taste some wines from the Mediterranean coast excluding France, Italy & Spain.

We tasted three wines from Greece, two from Moldova and one from the Lebanon. We also had a gift of a bottle from Romania, which although it does not have a coast, was tasted anyway.

Unfortunately none the wines could be described as outstanding although there were no disasters and the general consensus was to rate all between 5 and 7 / 10.

The next meeting in October will taste "wines for a wedding" and each couple will bring a bottle to try.

Roy Thurston



by Jan Skan

The cycling for pleasure group pushed themselves to the limits in August. They took a punt on the weather as Saturday had been appalling and cycled into Warwickshire to the lovely village of Welford on Avon which sits in a loop of the River Avon. If we had gone in 1930 we would have gone to Gloucestershire. The village maypole is one of the tallest in England. It used to be wooden but was replaced by an aluminium pole after a lightning strike. There are three pubs and many Tudor half-timbered thatched cottages mostly close to the village church, which is in the oldest part of Welford. Historically there were two railway station within two miles of the centre of the village, Binton (1885-1949) and Milcote (1859-1966). The route from Milcote into Stratford on Avon is now a traffic free cycle route. So there are some advantages to Dr Beeching! We visited one of the pubs for a Sunday lunch. The Bell Inn is an enjoyably civilised pub with appealing ancient interior and excellent carefully sourced food. We returned to Droitwich, which has always been in Worcestershire and still has a railway station, pleasantly fatigued.



June 2023 was the hottest June since records began but by 3rd July when we embarked on our 2nd post Covid Gallivant the weather had reverted to normal British Summer

weather....dull one minute, sunny the next, the odd shower & very blustery. Winterbourne House & Garden was the venue. The house was built in 1903 for the Nettlefold family. Guest Keen & Nettlefold will be familiar as GKN to many of us who originated in the Midlands as its headquarters were in Redditch and it had links to the automotive & steel industry. The house and garden were given to Birmingham University in 1944 and it finally opened to the public in 2010 having been lovingly restored. 12 of us arrived by minibus, 2 by car & 2 by train. We all enjoyed wandering around the gardens and then absorbing the atmosphere of The Arts & Craft house inspired by William Morris et al. It is the meeting place of the Birmingham branch of The British Cactus & Succulent society who are very well travelled according to one of gardeners we met who was wheeling a barrow full of cacti. The cacti greenhouse was impressive & unique. The gardens led down to a huge lake and we felt that even though we were in the middle of Birmingham we were in a magical green oasis.

By Jan Skan

Give it a try.....

Bridge Beginners Group



This is the final call for members wishing to be part of the 2023 Bridge Beginners Group. This group operates 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.

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 claimed 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.

The weekly 2-hour sessions will include some teaching (usually for about 30 mins or less) followed by practice play, putting the ideas into practice for the remainder of the session.

Written materials, broken down into 20 sets of subjects, each of 1 or 2 pages of A4, and a 2-page summary sheet will be provided (there will be a small charge to cover the cost of printing). Some of the subject sets last just one week, some last for several weeks, just depending on the subject. Regular attendance is necessary to get the most out of the course. However, it is expected that members will miss a few weeks here and there for holidays, etc. so the pace of the material is quite slow, and should allow members to "catch-up" quickly.

If we have up to about 8 members the meetings will be at the Group Leader's home (in Oakland Avenue - just off the Worcester Road going South out of Droitwich), but with a larger number it will be necessary to hire a room for the meetings. At current rates this will involve a charge of about £3 per week, but refreshments will be included in this cost.

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

Les Hazlewood



Line Dancing - Beginners + Group
First session- Friday 22nd September
Salwarpe Village Hall
10.00 - 11.30am
Never line danced? Done a little
and enjoyed the music?
Come and join in....

Line dancing is good for body and mind and it's fun! Gentle exercise which helps balance and memory. No experience necessary and no partner needed. All dances taught and walked through.

Bring a drink, wear comfortable shoes, come and enjoy! (Boots & hats not required)

Sample dances: The Freeze,
Cowboy Charleston, Feelin' Kinda Lonely

<https://youtu.be/Wzd6DdGcU4o>

Interested? Names to Val Hibbitt - valhibbitt@gmail.com or call on 01905 954988 if you would like to give it a try. £2 per person (minimum group size 12)

A warm welcome to the following new members:

Chris Smith
Carol Brandrickl
David Hibbitt
Ian Clarke
Sheila Huish
Karen Phillips
John Noble
Catherine Griffiths
Patricia McManus
Jack McManus
Patricia Pipe
Susan Saunders

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 November so please submit any articles/photos to the editor via the website or email to dorothy_colman@yahoo.co.uk by **Monday 6th November**

As always, 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.....

yarnbombing on a grand scale! Every year Cosby in Leics puts on a n amazing display throughout the village which attracts hundreds of visitors.

Below are just 2 of the exhibits.

Calendar dates

Monthly meetings/talks held
at The Norbury Theatre 2.30pm
3rd Monday of each month

Sep
18th **China in Six Objects - a talk
by H.J. Colston-Inge of the
Worcester Chinese Association**

Oct
16th **Worcester Street Pastors –
a talk by Jane Edwards**

Nov
20th **Our Heritage of Song –
a talk by Robin Burton**

Mon
Oct
9th **Open Afternoon at the
Community Hall, Heritage Way**



