



Images taken by the Digital Photography Group (See page 7 for details)

“Here we are at the beginning of November and such a lot has already occurred since the beginning of September. We held an Open Day at the beginning



of October, can I thank all those who took part with particular note to Carole Smallwood and her team for refreshments, all the Group Leaders who participated and Sue Ackrill and Anne Everard along with Les Hazelwood plus Barry Tait and team for pulling it all together. Though the event was not as well attended as last year we did attract new members and therefore from my perspective it was a success. Can I thank the Mayor of Droitwich Councillor Mrs Kate Fellows for opening the event and spending a lot of time going round the various group tables. Thank you for all the kindness shown towards her and I think we did convince her to join our u3a when she retires from being Mayor next year.

Can I add my welcome to all our new members, I do not often get a chance to meet you, but we are working to ensure you have a positive introduction and gain the maximum out of your u3a. I am only an email or phone call away should you wish to talk.

With the guidance of Sue Ackrill we have or will be starting several new groups including World Culture, Line Dancing, Walking Tennis, Pickleball and Traditional Pub Games. While we do not have a group leader in place for walking tennis at the time of writing, I wish to thank those Leaders that have come forward to set up these new groups as many have been very well received. At the heart of our u3a are the Group Leaders and without them our u3a would not exist.

Due to personal reasons our Treasurer Paul Lynskey has asked to step down from this position. Paul will continue to run the Table Tennis Group. David Hibbert has kindly agreed to step in and fill the position at short notice. David is from an accountancy background, and I am sure he will ensure our financial position will continue to provide good value to our members. Liz and Malcolm Ross have run our Web Site and Facebook Page for several years; they are moving out of the area and Barry Tait, who has a background in IT, with assistance from Les Hazelwood has taken over the role. The Committee and I would like to thank Paul, Liz and Malcom for the contribution over the years for the work they have done and on behalf of the membership. We wish you well.

It is with sad regret that I must report the passing of John Hargreaves. Our thoughts are with the family and John's friends at this time.

I trust you have all received the email from Carole regarding the Christmas Lunch. I look forward to catching up with many of you at this event. I know the event will be smaller than previous years due to venue restrictions, but I am sure it will be a great success. 12<sup>th</sup> of November is Remembrance Sunday, and I will be laying a wreath on our u3a's behalf at the war memorial in Victoria Square. Being a member of our u3a Genealogy Group has led me to find and subsequently visit my ancestors that fell in the First World War. Laying a wreath is a way of saying thank you to them for the life we have all been able to live and we will remember their sacrifice.

In closing I would like to thank the many unsung heroes who provide support for our groups, particularly those who make and serve tea and coffee at various meetings.”

Mike Bracey - Chair



*Welcome to new members:*

Anthony Capers, Patricia Williams, Eric Scranage  
Susan Devlukia, Chandravadan Devlukia, Carole Palin  
Shirley Willetts, John Donnelly, Gillian Davison  
Judith King, David King, Lynda Allen, Fiona Rabone  
Mary Field, Peter Field, Jonathan Watkins, Lesley Short, Paul  
Short, Amanda Pizey, Simon Masters, Margaret Masters,  
Robert Brown, Susan Brown, Alan Nash



**Spotlight on the Groups**

**We look forward to welcoming you to  
SINGING FOR PLEASURE**

**Singing is great for  
physical and  
mental health**



*Where Do I Begin? Oh What a Beautiful  
Morning, Speak Softly Love, Annie's Song*

**We meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of  
each month from 2 pm – 4 pm at the  
Baptist Church in Droitwich town centre.**

*Till There Was You* 🎵 *It's Now or Never* 🎵  
*I'm Into Something Good* 🎵 *Top of the World*  
*Ferry Cross the Mersey* 🎵 *All I Have to Do is*  
*Dream* 🎵 *Country Roads* 🎵 *You Raise Me*  
*Up*

We fill about an hour and a half with song,  
plus a break for refreshments.

*Deadwood Stage* 🎵 *Save the Last Dance For*  
*Me* 🎵 *The Bare Necessities* 🎵  
*I Know Him So Well*

*Thank You For the Music* 🎵 *A World of Our*  
*Own* 🎵 *Sweet Caroline* 🎵 *Meet Me on the*  
*Corner*

Everyone is welcome. There are NO singing  
ability requirements! There are NO auditions.  
The only requirement is to smile and enjoy  
singing together!

We currently have 150 songs in our lyric  
folders. Many of these will be already  
familiar to you. These include pop songs  
from 1950's to 1980's, songs from musical  
theatre and some folk songs.

Once a year we refresh the repertoire,  
adding some new songs and removing  
some older ones.

Singing for Pleasure began as an  
unaccompanied singing group. Currently  
we sing along to songs on Spotify, which  
helps underpin our singing, especially for  
those who are less confident. Our  
disparate voices somehow produce a very  
pleasant sound together!

*Mull of Kintyre* 🎵 *Master of the House* 🎵  
*Waterloo Sunset* 🎵 *The Last Thing on my*  
*Mind*

*Gill Ansfield*

**Wine Appreciation Group**

The Group met for a most  
convivial tasting in Rotary House  
on 25<sup>th</sup> October. The theme for  
the evening was "wines for a  
wedding" and members brought a bottle for  
everyone to try.



In view of the theme, the cost of the wine was taken  
into account when giving a rating and the best (given  
8+/10) was considered to be the Three Counties  
English White at about £10 - £12 per bottle. The  
Louis Guntrum Pinot Noir was considered a very nice  
wine but was also thought rather expensive at £15 so  
was marked down a little. The other wines were all  
given a rating of 6 or 7.

Our next tasting is scheduled for December 13<sup>th</sup> in  
Rotary House. This will be a Christmas social with no  
particular theme but members will bring a bottle of  
something different or something they would like  
everyone to try – should be entertaining.

*Roy Thurston*

### *Gallivanters by Jan Skan*

#### *September Gallivant to Broadway:*

No way in a month of Sundays would an individual have chosen to go to Broadway Tower on 19th September. The weather forecast was dire. But hey ho the minibus was booked so off the Gallivanters went to Broadway Tower. The Tower is an iconic landmark on top of the beautiful Cotswolds escarpment. It was the brainchild of the great 18th century landscape designer, 'Capability Brown'. His vision was carried out for George William 6th Earl of Coventry of Croome Park as a weekend retreat for his wife and completed in 1798. The location for the Tower was wisely chosen, a dramatic outlook on a pre-medieval trading route and beacon hill. It is an eccentric amalgamation of architectural components ranging from turrets, battlements and gargoyles to balconies.

After a convivial coffee break we all walked down the hill on The Cotswold Way. It was extremely blustery & slightly damp but the torrential rain held off. We emerged onto the High Street & some of us visited Broadway Museum & Art Gallery which is housed in a beautiful 17th Century former coaching inn. Built as The Angel Inn and now called Tudor House, it has been extended and adapted over the centuries but retains many original features. It is one of a very few 17th Century buildings in Broadway today, that is open to the public.

Others window shopped and then after lunch we visited The Gordon Russell Design Museum which celebrates the design pioneer Gordon Russell and his furniture company.

Built on the principles of good design that was accessible to all, Gordon Russell Ltd produced high quality, innovative designs evolving from the Arts and Crafts style to fully fledged Modernism. Our volunteer Guide was a fount of knowledge as he had been an apprentice & then an employee in the company. The minibus was parked not far away & soon we were back in Droitwich. To be honest, Broadway was better on a dismal weekday than when it is absolutely heaving with tourists on a glorious Bank Holiday.



#### *October Gallivant:*

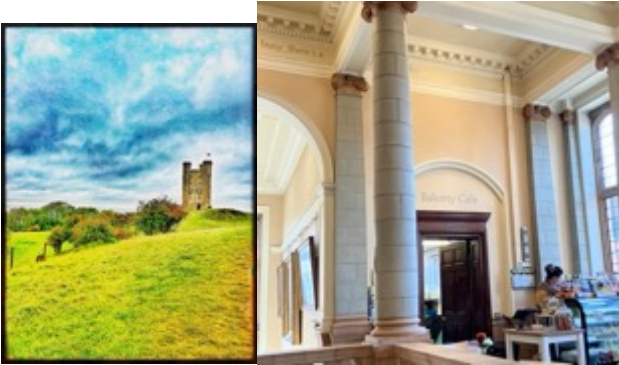
In October a group of us visited Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery. There were 2 exhibitions running:

- 1) "Paint the Streets".
- 2) "Peter Collins F1 hero Mustow Green to Nurburgring"

There were also the interesting permanent displays which include a Roman Mosaic from Bays Meadow, Droitwich.

If you haven't visited for a while, or never, I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised by what is on our doorstep just mere free bus ride on the 144. We all enjoyed refreshments in The Balcony Cafe and chatted about our ideas for 2024.

It was good to meet those who have recently joined the group who came well armed with ideas. Thank you all very much for your input.



Photos by The Gallivanter



**Growers' Group** by Sue Brown

On 19<sup>th</sup> October the Group and some guests visited La Serra, a commercial tomato grower in Throckmorton. We were given a very interesting talk (by Nick the General Manager) about the company and the establishment they have on site.

There are two glasshouses, each about 2.5 hectares, where they grow several varieties of tomato which are sold during winter in most UK supermarkets. The site also has a couple of anaerobic digesters which produce methane used to heat the glasshouse or sold to the Grid when in excess of requirements. The methane is also used to produce carbon dioxide to slightly increase the levels in the glasshouses in order to improve the growing conditions for the tomatoes.

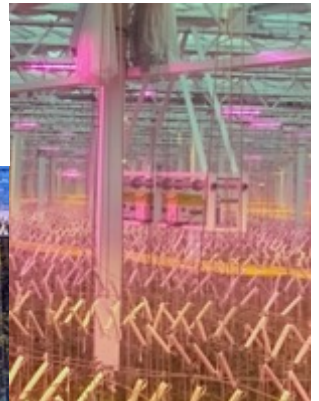
There is also a solar farm on the site which helps to supply electricity, surplus being sold the Grid. A special lighting system has been installed to ensure optimal conditions for growing.

The pollination of the plants is provided by hives of bumble bees which live in the glasshouses.

During the last couple of years the company has had problems (now fortunately resolved) with a tomato virus, so the biosecurity in the glass houses is extremely rigorous. We were not allowed into the glasshouses but could see everything from the viewing room.

When we left we were all given a very nice box of freshly picked tomatoes.

Looking down the greenhouse and bumblebee hives



**Genealogy Group** by Mike Bracey and Desmond Lawrence

For the first session of the Genealogy Group this year, we visited The Hive in Worcester for



a tour of its records and archives. We were shown round by Vicky Fletcher and she explained the records that were held that were relevant to finding our ancestors. Whilst there are now numerous records online, there are still many only available in county libraries, which can only be accessed via books, microfilm, or similar mediums. The tour included a look at the records held in



the vaults of the building, some of which date back to the mid-1100s. It was a fascinating tour and I wish to thank The Hive staff for making this visit possible.

There are many errors in our Ancestors records that come to light as part of the research we do on our families. Whilst it is rare, we can sometimes correct the historic record which proves to be very satisfying. Following a trip a few years ago to the Menin Gate at Ypres a distant relative's name was found in the remembrance records from the First World War. Researching the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Records revealed several errors in their online records. Following extensive research and submitting this to the CWGC, Private Fred Bracey of the Royal Warwickshire Regiments records have now been corrected.

The Genealogy Group meet on the third Tuesday of each month (except August) in Droitwich Library from 10.00 to 12.00. For further information please contact the Group Leaders via Droitwich u3a's web site.

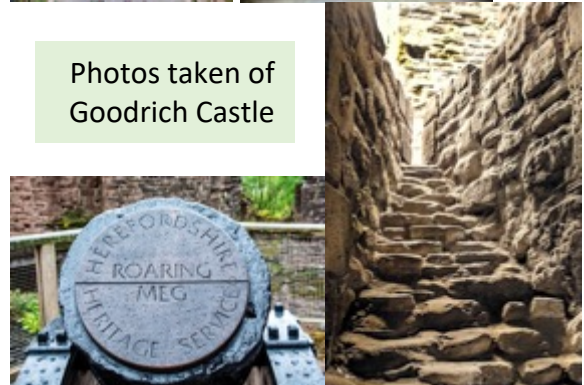
### ***The Digital Photography Group***

*by Derek Oakley*

Standing in the scenic countryside above the River Wye, Goodrich Castle is one of the finest and best preserved of all English medieval castles. The life of the castle itself began in the 11th century, soon after the Norman Conquest. Strategically placed along the border, Goodrich remained in royal hands until 1204 – when King John awarded it to the famous Sir William Marshal.



Photos taken of  
Goodrich Castle



The Group recently visited St.Peter's Church Droitwich.

The Vestry of St, Peter's Church was built in 1973 dedicated to the memory of Edward Winslow who was baptised in this church in 1595. Edward Winslow then went on to be one of the Pilgrims who sailed on the Mayflower serving three times as Governor of the Plymouth colony,

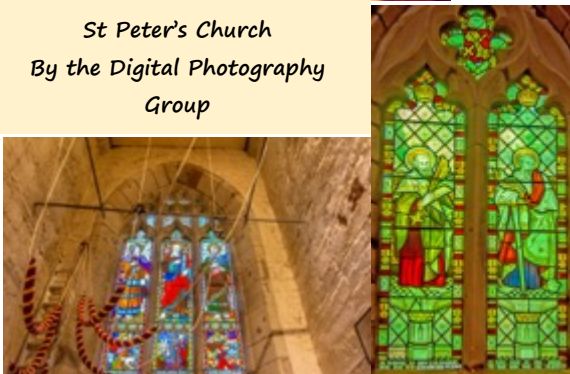
Originally there would have been a wooden Saxon church on the site of St Peters, however no traces of it remain today. The current church building still retains parts of its original Norman building including the chancel arch which is a fine example of the Norman style.

The Church was extended in the 12th century to the south. The south east window contains a very old example of stained glass work. There was another extension to the north side of the building added in the 14th Century. The tower was built in 1500 AD and the church we still see today was completed.

Following the visit to the church we walked down through the Lido Park to the Lido Cafe for coffee and cake.



*St Peter's Church  
By the Digital Photography  
Group*



The Digital Photography Group recently took a stroll along the Droitwich Underpass Art Trail (images on the cover page). Seven boring dull underpasses have been transformed into stunning outdoor pieces of art to be enjoyed by everyone. Each piece of art was created based on feedback and inspiration from the local community. Thanks to the local guide for his help navigating the circuit and directing us back to Little Al's Café at the Leisure Centre for coffee and cake.

To join our group contact Alan Meyrick at [ameyrick54@gmail.com](mailto:ameyrick54@gmail.com)

**The Good Old Days** by Derek Oakley. You may be currently looking at a modern DSLR or, if you are lucky, one of the latest mirror less cameras. It will have all the bells and whistles, a range of different modes, Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority, Auto, Program and Manual.

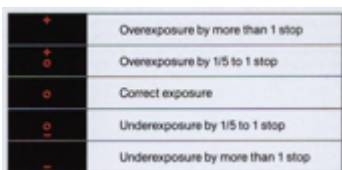
Back in the old days, before digital, in the days of film, a camera was created that had none of these modes and was simply fully Manual. The camera was the Nikon FM2 and FM2n.



Shutter speeds were selected by rotating a dial on the camera top plate, ASA/ISO settings were made for the film type in use by lifting and rotating the same dial.

The camera had a shutter speed range from 1 to 1/4000 at sec. + B. Speeds set were shown to the left along the top band in the viewfinder.

Apertures were marked around the periphery of the lens barrel and could be read inside the viewfinder in the middle of the top band by way of a tiny window at the base of the pentaprism allowing reading of the aperture directly off the lens.



Inside the viewfinder to the right a led lamp confirms correct exposure

The camera could therefore be controlled from within the viewfinder.

**Droitwich Wind Instrument Group (DWIG)**  
By Ron Hawkins

DWIG is made up of local brass and woodwind instrument players. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from 3pm-5pm at Crowle Village Hall. While we primarily meet to play music for fun, we have given several public performances this year:

In February at Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, we joined in their "Wassailing" event, playing music themed on trees, springtime etc. In June/July we played 40s/wartime music at the Severn Valley Railway's annual 40s event. Dressed in period costume, we played our music on the steam train from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth and back, which was great fun and very well received, with passengers singing along.

In August we played at Hereford for the second year running for the "Wye Float" event. Dressed for the Viking theme, we sat under a bridge and played water themed music as a large assortment of inflatable boats drifted past on the River Wye. We had fun with everything from Handel's Water Music to "Popeye the Sailor" and collected £50.14 for the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

**Forthcoming events:**

DWIG will be playing Carols in the Victoria Square area of Droitwich, on 9th December at 14.30, and again on 16th December at 10.30.

We are pleased to invite all brass or woodwind players to come and play carols with us at our Monday 11<sup>th</sup> meeting in Crowle, from 3pm to 5pm.



All music reading brass and woodwind instrument players are welcome – please contact group leader David Wornham for more information  
Tel. 01905 775840 or [flexicase@gmail.com](mailto:flexicase@gmail.com)



Playing at the Wye Float



### *u3a Calendar dates*

*Monthly meetings with speakers are held on the third Monday of each month (except December) at the Norbury Theatre at 2.30pm*

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November: Alternative & Complimentary Therapy – a talk by Sarah Hill**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas meal at the Crown & Sandys, Midday for 12.30 – booking essential**

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024: a talk on Commonwealth War Graves**

MST talks held at Rotary House:

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> Nov : The role of semi-conductors in today's revolution – talk by Peter Gammon**

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> Dec: The Star of Bethlehem (astronomy) – a talk by Steve Barrett**

### *New local history book – this November*

..5070050

## A DROITWICH MISCELLANY

FROM WYCHE TO DROITWICH SPA



Published by

**The Droitwich History & Archaeology Society**

252 pages packed full of interesting short articles about many aspects of the town's history and which were first published in the Droitwich History & Archaeology Society's Newsletters 1984-2015. This is a book to dip into for articles on our local Archaeology; the loss of or saving of historical timber-framed buildings; local people; the development of the town over many centuries; and much, much more.

*The book costs just £12 and will be on sale at meetings of the Droitwich History & Archaeology Society, Droitwich Spa Civic Society and the u3a meeting on Monday 20 November and various group meetings tba*

Thank you to all who have contributed articles and updates plus some wonderful photos for this edition.

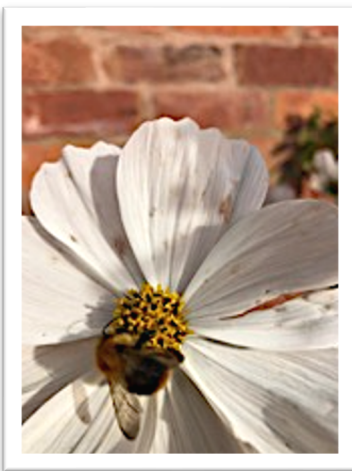
It looks like Autumn has definitely arrived with plenty of unsettled weather! However, when possible, it's good to take a walk round an arboretum or ramble into the countryside to marvel at the changing colours of the trees. The Droitwich underpass artwork also certainly looks worth a tour round, amazing!

It's also an ideal opportunity to perhaps check out a new u3a group to try; there are a few new ones being set up. It's terrific to be able to welcome so many new members to our u3a.

The next newsletter will be published in January 2024 so please submit any articles/photos including any interesting Christmas stories you may have to the editor via the website or email to [dorothy\\_colman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dorothy_colman@yahoo.co.uk) by **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January**

*Editor*

And finally....



This photo was taken on 1<sup>st</sup> November! It was such a surprise to see not just one but at least three bees land on this cosmos plant to gather nectar so late on in the year!



