Arts, Crafts and Music

Examples of some of the group activities which take place in

Elmbridge U3A 2019
**Art Appreciation**

This group meets in a private house in Esher once a fortnight between 10.15 and 12.15. Usually about 8 out of the 9 registered attend. The group started in 2016 when the original leader fell in and later died.

I plan the subjects but accommodate requests from within the group.

We have covered a diversity of subjects and Artists over the past two years and plan to do more of the same.

We took a trip to the Dulwich Art Gallery and plan another one this year.

*Chris Creagh Brown*

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**Music Appreciation**

This group meets every 3rd Friday in the month from 10.30am to 12.30pm, approximately, at a private house very near Walton Bridge.

At present there are 10 members but there would be space for only two more. 'I don't know when the group started but I took over in 2012 when the previous leader retired due to poor health.'

Each month I prepare a printed programme of classical music for each member which shows the composers’ dates, the work in question, the performers and the duration of the choice. Sometimes other members like to include a work they particularly like and this is printed in the programme and they are free to introduce it if they so wish. The music covered stretches mostly from the 16th to the 20th century - orchestral, quartets, particular instruments, operas, songs etc etc.

There is an interval for tea/coffee and biscuits and the all important chat. It is a very friendly group and anyone who would like to give it a try would be very welcome.'

*Valerie Lane*
Flower Painting

This group meets on the first Thursday of each month between 10.00 and 12.00 at the group leader's home in Molesey.
There are currently seven members of which typically 4 to 5 attend.

The group was started in 2003 by Isobel Eakin who loved painting in miniature.

I took over at her request in 2006.

I am not an art teacher and quickly found that new "painters" find it difficult to paint in miniature. So we paint larger flowers from real blooms or leaves. We paint individual or vases of flowers and learn by experiment and from each other.
I naturally provide a seasonal topic and we enjoy a friendly chat as we try to capture colours and shapes on our paper.

Rosemary Methley
**Friday Film Club**

When I joined the U3A in 2017 I was looking for classes on Film, Jazz Appreciation and similar activities, but doing this on a Thursday morning, say, over a cup of tea, did not really appeal. These things should be enjoyed in the evening, I thought, over a glass of wine. And so the idea of the Film Club was born.

The Film Club started on a Friday evening in October 2017 as a vague idea. We met at my house and decided to operate on the same basis as a Book Club, meeting once a month and watching a film chosen in turn by the group members.

This is followed by a short discussion informed by notes and yes, we do have a glass of wine and a variety of nibbles.

The membership is about 20, but between 5 and 12 normally come along. In December we hit a high of 17 which challenged the accommodation, but we coped and had a lively session watching *A Very Long Engagement*.

Other films we have watched include *Il Postino*, *Harold and Maude*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Bagdad Café*, *Last Orders*, *Went the Day Well*, *Lion* and the latest being *Nebraska*.

Fred Smith
Photography

The photography group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in Weybridge at 2pm. It started in 2014 and out of the 11 members we usually get 8-9 members at each meeting.

The existing Photography group was full so I decided to provide a new venue for U3A group members to meet.

Members bring along digital photographs following a theme set for each session. We review these for quality and interest. The second part of each session involves a presentation and discussion on technical aspects of photography.

Topics covered in the last two years include Basics of Digital Photography, Camera design trends, Portraiture in sunlight. Group visits in Summer months to local places of interest.

In the future we plan to continue the present format as it seems to be popular, but are flexible to changes requested by members.

Stephen Black
Patchwork and Quilting

This group meets at the leader's home monthly at a time and date agreed with the group. There are usually 4/5 people who attend.

The group was started about 7 years ago and I was asked to start it. We take it in turns to lead the meeting and everyone talks of something of interest during the session.

We sew, discuss our work and offer one another suggestions.

We made one project together which was a quilt raffled to benefit the Shooting Star Hospice, and are currently sending finished quilts to the Linus Project which is a charity giving quilts to pre natal units, women's refuges and children in difficult circumstances.

In the future we hope to start a new group or .... who knows, we go with the flow ..... we're quilters.

Alice Shuff
Music and All that Jazz

We meet on alternate Fridays at 10.30 in Hinchley Wood. There are 15 on roll and usually about 12 attend each meeting. The group was formed about 2012 when a request was made for someone to run it. The topics are convened by the leader of the group after discussion with the members.

In the autumn of 2018 some of the topics we covered were different interpretations of the same tune, Dexter Gordon, the Atlantic record label, and Johnny Hodges. We shall continue to look at member selected topics and hope to explore closer links with the Elmbridge ‘Jazz and All that Music’ group.

As perhaps the most remarkable musical phenomenon of the last century, jazz has developed rapidly since the Original Dixieland Jazz Band made the first recordings of the music in 1917 in New York. From its simple beginnings as popular entertainment, it progressively and rapidly became a respected art form which is played, listened to and admired all over the world and widely taught in universities. Once described as America’s classical music, it has both influenced and been influenced by other music genres from across the spectrum.

In the course of its history it has produced a vast legacy of recordings which continue to inspire and thrill listeners. It is recorded jazz that forms the basis of our group’s meetings. At each session, a group member will choose and play a selection of recordings which we then talk about. There is no expectation that everyone will like everything: it’s important that the music should excite, engage and even on occasion provoke. By making available to members the widest range possible of jazz and its derivatives, we seek to broaden group members’ exposure to the seemingly limitless range of the music, backing this up with insights into the music’s history and the remarkable characters – players, producers, writers, record company owners – who have shaped its development.

Our group does not have a definition of what constitutes jazz. If you think something is jazz, that’s fine by us. Bring it along, let’s all listen and talk about it. Inclusivity is the name of the game.

Allen Cooper
Singing

This Singing Group meets between 2 and 4 pm on a Friday towards the end of the month, in the leader’s home in Weybridge.

There are 10 members and usually about attend each time.

The group started in 2018 after the group had been advertised but had no one to run it. I was then persuaded to run it. We started with a discussion on how the sessions should be run.

It was decided that the leader should ask the group for suggestions of songs we would like to sing and then download the words and music from the internet. Words are emailed out in advance to members and we then try to sing them from the downloaded music.

This group is very much a group for people who like singing but are not going to take it too seriously. A social gathering.

We started our first meeting with songs from the musicals. The November meeting was Christmas songs and carols.

It is all very experimental at the moment as we have no musicians in the group and we are trying to make it work with very limited resources

Sheila Taylor
**Opera Enjoyment**

The Opera enjoyment group meets on the second Thursday of each month between 2 and 5pm in Minda Alexanders house. It was set up a year ago and now has 6-8 members attending regularly.

As the leader of the group I have found the U3A “Sources” magazine invaluable and the advice given by the “expert” is very clear. Show a full opera at each meeting; discuss the opera both before and after the showing and get to know what resources are available to you. After registering with the Resource Centre, it is possible to order a DVD free of charge provided you return it promptly. The only cost is the return postage.

At each meeting I introduce the opera by going quickly through the Synopsis. Everyone is helped by the fact that the DVD’s have subtitles in a number of languages.

At the end of the show members share their opinions and thoughts about the opera.

The only problem we have found is that many operas run for more than 2 hours. Some can be shown in 2 parts although that is not recommended.

So the Opera Enjoyment group looks forward to its third year in 2019. Join us if you can and enjoy the opera.

* Murray Reece
The Elmbridge U3A Choir

“Since singing is so good a thing I wish all men (sic) would learn to sing”. So said the 16th Century composer William Byrd, a view echoed by the Elmbridge U3A Choir, now in its 25th year. The choir was founded in 1994 and has been under the leadership of its present conductor, Ray Blues, since 2002. There are currently around 30 members and we perform three main concerts each year, usually at Eastertide, Summer and Christmas. We sing music from the classics, sacred and secular, Christmas Carols, songs from the shows, traditional songs, Madrigals and community “sing-a-longs”. Christmas Carols and the Eastertide concert of sacred music are performed at St. Peter's Church, Hersham. Our concerts are free of charge but we nevertheless aim to provide a high standard of music and performance. For example, at this year’s Easter Concert the choir, with guest soloists, performed the ‘The Last Supper’, a short Cantata by Eric Thiman, to a large and appreciative audience.

We rehearse at Hersham Baptist Church where a light-hearted summer concert is also performed. This year’s concert in July will be celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Elmbridge U3A. The rehearsal atmosphere, though rigorous and professional, is always relaxed and friendly and there is time for refreshments when people can get to know each other.

We welcome new singers, ladies and (especially) men in all parts: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. There is no audition but we suggest that those interested come and sit in on a rehearsal to see if they would like to join. It helps if new members are able to read music or have experience of singing in a choir however long ago, but this is not essential. If you are interested in joining the choir and would like to talk it over, please call our Chairman Tony Smith on 01483 479 648 or our Musical Director Ray Blues on 01932 862 788.

The Elmbridge U3A Choir