

# REVIEW OF "THE BEST OF TIMES"

Entertainment by U3A members on the theme of 'Time', Exmouth Pavilion, 10:30 16 January 2020.

It was an awful, stormy rainy morning. Just the weather to sit in the warmth of The Pavilion amongst friends and be entertained by the various talented U3A members, assembled, organised and generally cajoled into line, including Line Dancing, by Wendy Groves. And the Pavilion main hall was full to bursting!



There were contributions from many U3A Groups, including a musical welcome from the Music in Performance Group urging us to get our kicks on Route 66.

Readings of "What is Time" and "The Fairy on the Tree" from the Poetry Group set the scene admirably, especially after the microphone had been

turned on. No microphone was needed for the 20 or more members of the Singing Group who told us about "Some Enchanted Evening" melodiously and enchantingly. Later they urged us to 'Don't stop thinking about tomorrow' but we were too busy enjoying today.

Various Limericks from the Creative Writing Group peppered the proceedings throughout, reminding us of times of bombs and blitzes, horror films at the cinema, toothbrushes in racks and a ride-on mower. They even managed to get East Devon to rhyme with Heaven. Variety is the spice of life and they gave us plenty.

The Book Group found a lot of interesting time-related readings, including 'A Gentleman In Moscow', ordered to spend the rest of his life in a hotel, and 'The Seagull Hotel', another hotel story, this time based locally in Exmouth, about two war-widowed mothers and their very young children who ran their own hotel.



If you ever want to trace your Family Tree, then there was lots of good advice from The Family History Group, including always to put names on the back of photographs, don't believe absolutely everything your relatives tell you, don't enquire too closely about the relative no-one wants to talk

about but DO talk to your grandchildren so that they know what you know.

The Photography Group showed us photographs of the effect of time on tidal flow, sunrise and sunset and local vegetation through the seasons while the Walking Group walked around The Pavilion to the tune of 'Climb Every Mountain', roped together of course, as mounting the stage could lead to injuries and falls! On the return journey they sang 'You'll never walk alone' and so did we.

Another contribution from the Poetry Group reminded us of the gems from Ecclesiastes - a time to be born and a time to die etc. - which in turn reminded me of the song by The Byrds 'Turn turn turn'. The recited times that stuck in my mind were the positive ones, heal, build, laugh, dance. Looked for 'Live' and 'Learn' but couldn't find them.

It was time for more music and 'Autumn Leaves' admirably fitted the bill, and the windy weather whistling outside. Keeping us cosy, the Quilting Group demonstrated their craft and talked about quilts inspired, for example, by the Grenfell Disaster. They showed us fine examples of their work which they generally donate to local charities.



The Play Reading Group talked of Thomas Hardy's grandmother in 'One We Knew' with reflections on her life and her memories of youth, candle light, dancing and the French Revolution. A poignant reminder of the passage of time and of customs and ways of life.

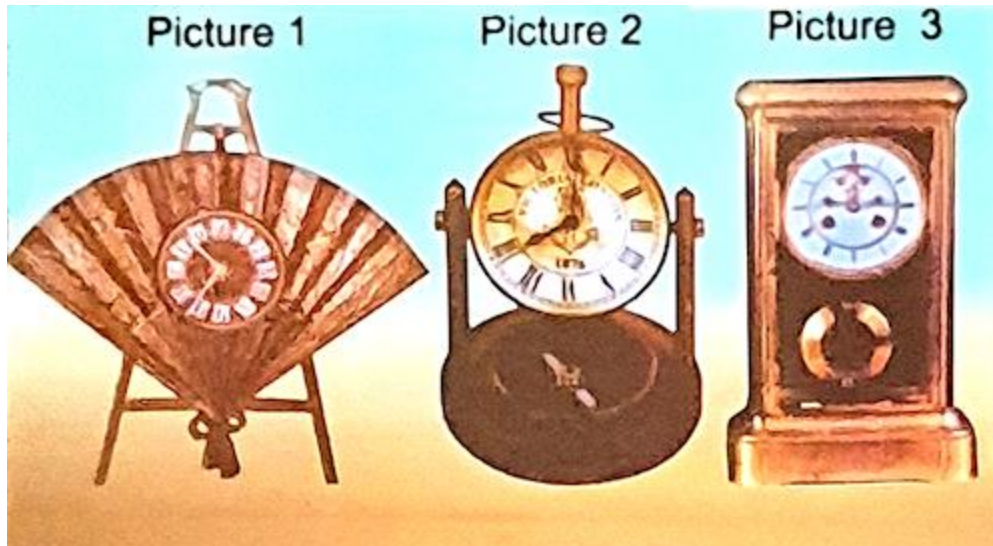
To jolt us out of our reveries, The Line Dancing Group appeared, and all in a line too. First a synchronous dance by five members, with no cowboy boots to be seen. Then later a demonstration by the Latin Line Dancing Group to 'Saturday Night Fever' followed by an invitation for brave audience members to join in.



We were trampled in the rush and there was just enough audience left to enjoy the spectacle of a few minutes rehearsal followed by a mass Line Dancing Spectacular, mostly in time.

More catchy music from the Singing Group - 'The Longest Time' - which went by in a flash.

We've all seen the Antiques Road show on television. Well we have our own Antiques Group and we were presented with a novel demonstration of one aspect of their meetings. An image of three quite different clocks was shown on the screen, together with some descriptions and valuations from 2002.



We were asked by show of hands to choose that which was currently the most valuable. I was wrong as were quite a number of the audience. (Spoiler alert - it was number 1.)

More music to settle us down - 'The Midnight Hour' from the Music Performance Group, which gave the sax and trumpet good solo spots and another chance for Wendy to lead the singing.



After another bout of line dancing, a familiar photograph from the 1960s appeared on the screen. The Beatles of course, followed by the words to 'Eight Days a Week'. Many of us didn't need the words as we knew them off by heart. We sang and we sang, remembering the time we first heard

those lyrics. It was not a time to be silent, nor a time to weep. It was a time to enjoy the hard work of those who entertained us so admirably and to say 'Thank you' to everyone involved.



And in that spirit, and winding up the proceedings, David, our compère, thanked everyone for attending and organising a wonderful entertainment while Christine offered appreciation to the Pavilion Staff for their technical help, all the contributors and especially to Wendy for all her hard work organising what had been a thoroughly enjoyable experience. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Wendy by Sandy amid loud applause.

By Ian McLauchlin, U3A Committee Member, 16jan20

(Original photos available as .jpeg files if needed.  
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