



## Olton and District u3a, November 2023 Newsletter No 83

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Hello and welcome to the November newsletter.

November is always a time for reflection and remembrance, of days gone by both in history and in the year. We all seem to say, "Where has this year gone?" as each year seems to pass quicker than the last. Alan and I thought we would have a short break in a static caravan down in Christchurch but didn't bank on sitting through storm Ciaran!!

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### **ARE YOU A BUDDING SINGER?**



The **Chandos Choir** meet every Tuesday at Solihull Methodist Church from 7.45pm to 9.45pm. They hold 4 concerts a year and do not hold any auditions and through learning and rehearsal and practising at home everyone learns the notes and can sing comfortably. Having been in existence for over half a century they have many members and have a professional conductor and accompanist. They are looking for all ranges of singer but especially for bass and tenor singers. Please consider joining them on a Tuesday, meeting new people and learning songs, by finding details on the Chandos flyer showing their next concert.

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### **Next Core Meeting - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 1.30pm for 1.45pm start**

We are currently up to capacity for this month's Core Meeting.  
**Please do not turn up if you haven't already booked.** Thank you.  
Val Rapson - Membership Secretary ([valrapson06@gmail.com](mailto:valrapson06@gmail.com))

### **Speaker Secretary for the Core Meetings – Beverley P**

Last Month Michael Skinner gave us an interesting talk on Shanty songs, and we were all given the opportunity to join in on the chorus. Many people have commented on how enjoyable his session was. Michael has informed me that we donated the grand total of £110.34p in the RNLI collection bucket. He has asked me to pass on his thanks to you all for your kind generosity.

The November speaker is now going to be Jean Jackson who is our Regional u3a trustee.

There will be no speaker in Dec so in January David Carrington Porter, who is blind, will be giving a talk entitled 'As I see it'

## **Recycling opportunity from Roy W. (Treasurer)**

We will have a collection box for used cartridges at the next core meeting. Any money raised from recycling cartridges will be used to support Olton and District u3a.



We have already raised over £26.00 so please keep bringing your cartridges along.

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## **Reserves – Roy W**

At September's AGM, it was agreed that the new Committee would review the level of reserves held and consider whether this might now be reduced as we no longer face the uncertainties of the last couple of years. The u3a National guidance does not specify the level of reserves that should be maintained but, as a minimum, there should be sufficient to enable the charity to function for at least six months. Most use a 12-month operating period as a safe target and this has been our u3a's policy to date.

The new Committee has now reviewed our reserves policy, taking into account our recent accounting history, future running costs, the need to provide for future capital expenditure (especially the replacement of existing equipment), current uncertainty about inflation, the desirability of not subjecting members to fluctuations in membership fees and, of course, fairness to our members.

The Committee have therefore decided that, in keeping with many other u3a groups, we will aim to maintain reserves, as now, at the level of one year's income. It is, of course, difficult to predict future income and costs with any certainty. So, the Committee will continue to keep the level of reserves under review and any significant fluctuation will be taken into account when setting membership fees.

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## **Thanks, Given – Jo R.**

Thanks to Pam's florist of Lyndon Road for donating Olton and District u3a poppy wreath.

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## **News from our interest groups**

### **Trips Group – Margaret H.**

Hello, all Olton & District u3a members

With Xmas approaching it's time to organise a trip to a seasonal market and this year we think that Cheltenham Arts and Crafts might be a nice one. You can find details on the Cheltenham website. Cheltenham has a wealth of delightful architecture, an art gallery and museum and Holst House which is an homage to Gustav Holst, composer of The Planets.

The proposed date for the trip is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December. The market only opens on the 14<sup>th</sup>, so this is the earliest feasible date. We would be leaving at 9:15 from Olton Friary as usual for an anticipated arrival in Cheltenham at 10:30. The return journey would leave at 4:30 to arrive back in Olton around 5:45.

The cost should be £16 per person (£2 extra for anyone who is not a u3a member) which includes a tip for the driver.

Please contact me via my email address: [m\\_hansford1@hotmail.com](mailto:m_hansford1@hotmail.com) to register as soon as possible as I will need to know numbers to book the coach.

If you have already booked a place, please do NOT apply again. Thank you.

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### **Creative Writing Group – Gordon C.**

At our October Meeting we discussed our individual pieces and the continuation pieces which one person starts, and we each provide our individual finishes. They were very different finishes for a story where a bored guy follows random people as if he were a private detective.

For our next meeting we have a free choice of subject, and we meet on 22nd November 2023 in The Core Café at 2:00pm

Further information from Gordon C. 07815 887095

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### **Swimming Group – Susanne R.**

The Swimming Group will be meeting up for our last swim of this year on Wednesday 6th December, meeting at Fox Hollies Leisure Centre at 10.00 a.m. Look forward to seeing you there.

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### **French Language and Culture – Pam D.**

During October, we started to explore the geography of France and so far, have read up on the regions of La Normandie and La Bretagne.



We practised some holiday phrases asking for help and phrases useful when ordering food in a restaurant. The music we listened to was 'Sous le Ciel de Paris' sung by Pomplamoose and 'Aux Champs-Elysees' sung by Joe Dassin. Check out them on You Tube as both are well worth a listen.

Sessions in November will take place at the facilitator's home in Shirley on the 10th and 24th November between 10.30 am and 12 noon. Anyone interested should contact Pamela Davis on 0121 745 5707 or email her at [pamelajoandavis@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pamelajoandavis@yahoo.co.uk)

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### **Scrabble and Rummikub Group – Chris F.**

There were 7 eager players at the November session, and we opted to play Rummikub with three on one table and four on the other.

The next session will be on the 4th of December and Beverley Peet has volunteered to run it for me as I am away. The next one after that would be in February as the 1st of January is New Year's Day.

Have a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year.

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### **Line Dancing Group – Gill N. and Sue M.**



The Line Dancing group has now been going for almost seven years on a weekly basis with two classes, a beginner and improver. We all love dancing, and it is reported to increase muscle tone, helps with balance and co-ordination and brain memory.

We are a happy social group of dancers and have lots of fun in the lessons. From Gill and Sue - Facilitators

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### **Poetry Group – Angela K.**

The Poetry Group continues to grow, we started with four and are now up to 13, all lovely people and great to spend time with.

This is my last contribution to the Newsletter as I am retiring as facilitator and Glenys T, who is one of the poetry group members will be taking over and I know she'll do a good job. I'll still attend the group sessions and will help if needed. I've enjoyed being the facilitator of this nice group of people but time to retire and let someone else take over.

#### **The November Poem by Thomas HOOD**

No sun - no moon  
No - morn - no noon  
No dawn - no dusk -no proper time of day  
No sky looking blue  
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees  
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds -  
NOVEMBER

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### **Craft and Chat – Jan B.**



The Craft and Chat group had an enjoyable meeting on the 26th of October. As you can see from the photos the group were busy knitting and croCarol O is making a beautiful draft excluder, Lynda M is making a cushion and Marion has made a stripey fish which she will fill with catnip and donate to a cat's charity.

Our next meeting will be on the 23rd of November. Hope to see you there.

## **Family History – Keith Y.**

The date of the next meeting, at the Solihull Library IT Room (1st floor), is 17th November 2023. I can confirm that the December meeting will take place as normal on 15<sup>th</sup>.

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## **Garden lovers' group – Rob C.**



On 8<sup>th</sup> October 17 of us made a self-drive visit to the Apple Day and country fair event at Hill Close gardens in Warwick. The event was clearly very popular with many locals as there were hundreds of visitors. The varied gardens were a joy to walk around and there were lots of different crafts for sale. The tearoom was well stocked with both food and drink. There was even a music band. A splendid day. You can see a photograph of me pondering why my Asters don't grow as well as these!

Our meeting on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November is at the College of Food for lunch but it is fully booked.

Our December meeting will be on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December at the hall at the Friary from 1.30pm to 3.30 pm. Carol, Gill and Annette are helping me to organise a nice afternoon. There will be a chance to use your garden craft skills to make something nice for Christmas, a garden related quiz, some food and drink and a chance to find out what is planned for garden group in 2024. There will be a small entry charge of £2.00 per person (reduced to £1.50 per person if you are wearing something Christmas related) to go towards the hall hire costs but we have built up a small surplus since Covid from coach trips and I am hoping this will cover all other costs.

Please let Rob know if you intend to come along.

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## **Local History Group – Pat K.**



On a wet and windy day 18 of our members braved the weather to visit the synagogue at Singers Hill. We were met by Steve who ushered us immediately in out of the rain, into the very beautiful synagogue. What an engaging, charming and eloquent man he is. He illustrated the facts with little personal anecdotes which made us laugh and we all enjoyed it immensely. He imparted so much knowledge, it is hard to remember it all.

I was delighted that our group had lots of questions for Steve, and he has already sent me an email saying how much he enjoyed our visit and thanking us for our donations of £87.

Thank you all for your support of our very first Local History outing!

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## **Quiz Group – Hilary B. and Carol O.**

Hidden in these sentences are the names of 12 materials the 'Craft and Chat' Group might use. Can you find them? E.g. Are those emus line dancing? Answer = muslin.

1. She knew oology is the study of eggs.
2. I can't wait any longer.
3. You can vastly improve this work.
4. She will do well in English.
5. He carefully cracked the egg.
6. She was a tiny baby.
7. I am bringing ham sandwiches for lunch.
8. This is a useful garden implement.
9. Did you just call me an old fossil, Kenneth?
10. You can't take A-Level Veterinary Science.
11. He made a speech in Tzarist Russia.
12. In the film, Morgan zapped him with his stun gun

Here are the answers to October's Disney quiz.

1. 'Sleeping Beauty'
2. 'Pinocchio'
3. 'The Lion King'
4. 'Peter Pan'
5. 'Robin Hood'
6. 'Bambi'
7. 'Finding Nemo'
8. 'The Lady and the Tramp'
9. 'Dumbo'
10. 'Frozen'
11. 'Jungle Book'
12. '101 Dalmatians'

The Quiz Group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1.30pm at Olton Friary. Our next meeting is on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, which will be a special Christmas Quiz. Carol and Hilary would be pleased to see you if you would like to join us.

**If you have any articles, you would like included for the December newsletter, please send them to me at [oltonu3aeleanor@gmail.com](mailto:oltonu3aeleanor@gmail.com)**