

Newsletter

Dear Members

A few words.

Just as we thought the summer was over, we've had a number of wonderful days, admittedly it was a bit too hot at times but we mustn't grumble, it might have been non stop rain!

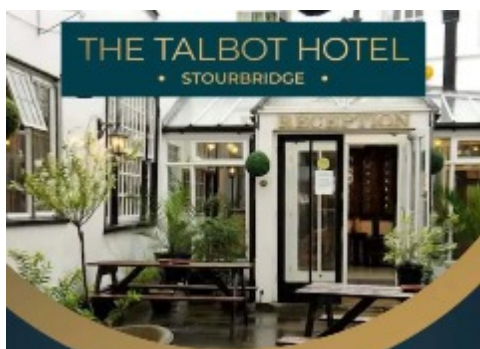
The pro rata reduction in our fee for the remaining 6 months has meant quite a few new members have joined us. Welcome to our new members and thank you 'old' members, for your continued support and enthusiasm.



The photo is of your Chairman at Tewkesbury Abbey on a u3a canal group trip. It depicts four children (+1) from different ethnic backgrounds, who are sitting on the ground so that their feet (soles) are touching – but so are their spirits (souls).

Fortunately, no one took a photo of me getting up!! Living proof that "Grandparents are antique children".

Best wishes,
Barbara



Stourbridge u3a Christmas Meal

8th December Christmas Social Event.

The Christmas Meal will be held at the Talbot Hotel at 12pm mid-day in their refurbished upstairs ballroom. 4 Courses for £25.

Contact brendastevenson53@gmail.com to book your place.

Learn, laugh, live!

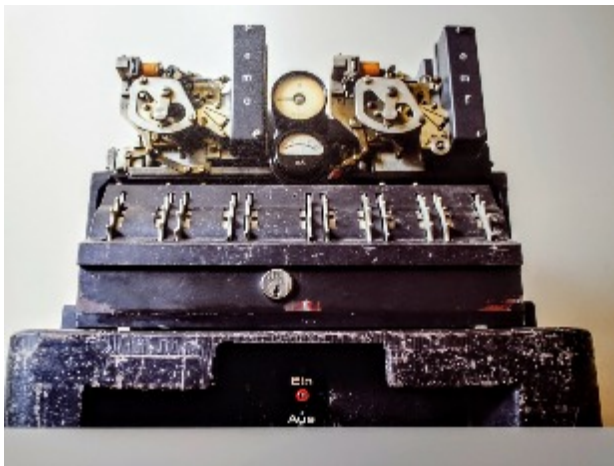
Visit to Bletchley Park

Visit to Bletchley Park 4th September.

We left Stanley Road around 8:15 am on a bright sunny morning. We arrived at Bletchley Park around 11:30 am and were shown into the Visitor Centre. We were handed a map of the site with some details of the content of each building. Free audio tours, or guided tours were also available.

There was plenty of opportunity to follow your own path and visit buildings in any order. Picnic tables and deck chairs were available in the pleasant surroundings and around the lake. Also a NAAFI style restaurant was based in a wooden hut.

In the huts many photographic displays and wartime artefacts with storyboards explained their significance and history; and videos described the work carried out at Bletchley Park.



Naval version of Enigma

I quite enjoyed the temporary Data exhibition and the current intelligence activities surrounding the UK like the active tracking of all shipping 24/7 and the ability to quickly interrogate the telephone system to determine who has been speaking to who in potential espionage cases!

During WW11, very few staff knew the whole system and processes or even how much they were contributing to it. This meant that any leakage of information from a single person would be less valuable to our enemies at the time.



Alan Turing's Office.

One exception was Alan Turing, who had his own office as shown in the photograph, and he was able to independently support the generation of new cryptographic processes to decode signals received from the enemy. Many others of equally high intelligence helped design and construct code breaking equipment to aid them like Bill Tutte and Tommy Flowers. It was a very intense game of cat and mouse with cryptographic experts on both sides always trying to outdo each other and the numbers involved grew from a few hundred in 1942 to over 8,000 people being employed at Bletchley Park by the end of the war.

A very interesting visit overall with the bonus of having an annual return pass for the rest of the year, we departed at 3.30pm and arrived back at 6.00pm with a slight delay due to an accident on the M40 motorway.

James Gennard

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Visit to Quarry Bank Mill

Quarry Bank Mill – 11 th July 2023

Our July outing was to Quarry Bank Mill in Style, Cheshire. Built in 1784, this Grade 11 listed building is one of the best-preserved cotton mills in England. The owner, Samuel Greg and his wife, Hanna Lightbody took a paternalist attitude toward their workers, providing medical care for all, and limited education for the children, all of whom worked up to 72 hours per week.



View of Quarry Bank Mill

There was a guided tour of the Apprentice House, where children as young as 10 were housed in segregated areas. These children mostly came from Workhouses and would have considered themselves lucky to be living in better conditions and having regular meals of porridge for breakfast, porridge and vegetables for lunch and meat in the evenings.

We then walked down to the machine rooms, as the children would have done every day except Sunday, to see a demonstration of the cotton making process.

This would have been a very dusty environment for the workers and dangerous for the children who had to collect any fibre that fell under the moving machinery.

The staff were very keen to give us information about how the process worked and one lady visitor asked to buy one of the cones of thread. The staff were quite surprised, so doubt, these will be appearing in the gift shop in the future.



Working Mill Looms

There are attractive gardens around the mill, with a bridge over the obligatory stream, and the usual National Trust restaurant and gift shop. Altogether, this was a very enlightening experience, and I would personally like a return visit to see the local village of Style which is a short walk from the mill.

Brenda Smith

QUOTE – "Life would be so wonderful if only we knew what to do with it." GRETA GARBO

(But then there was no u3a in her day!)

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INTEREST GROUPS



LAUGHTER YOGA

Maggie Thompson, member of Stourbridge u3a, will start running Laughter Yoga sessions via Zoom on a monthly basis from Tuesday, 26 September 2023 to 19 December 2023 from 3.30 pm and it will appear on the u3a Learning Events page:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

These sessions will take place on the last Tuesday of every month, from 3.30pm-4.30pm. Please ignore the eventbrite timings which imply the last session starts at 4.30pm.

Tuesday 26 September at 3.30
Tuesday 31 October at 3.30
Tuesday 28 November at 3.30
Tuesday 19 December at 3.30
(please note not last Tuesday)

These will be 45-minute sessions where she will introduce the concept of Laughter Yoga and take participants through a series of exercises, hand claps and deep breathing to give them an energising and uplifting experience. You can see a draft of the entry to be included (but it has an error relating to Fridays) by following this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/monthly-laughter-yoga-with-merrie-maggie-tickets-672104190727?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Maggie Thompson



CYCLING GROUP

The Cycling Group has a new programme of weekly rides from July to September.

It can be downloaded from the Cycling Group page on our website and includes one more evening ride during July and an all day ride to Avoncroft Museum of Buildings in Bromsgrove.

Maggie Thompson

GROUP NEWS

The **Environment and Climate Change** group will be restarting in the Autumn, existing members will be contacted, if you'd like to join this group then please contact caplanivor@gmail.com

The **French Advanced** group has room for one more member. This friendly group meets twice a month in each others homes. Contact Margaret directly mjdlibraree@yahoo.co.uk or use the message box on the **French Advanced** group page.

Learn, laugh, live!

Golf Group



Best Mens Score – Shaun Grennan

We held our first Summer Golf Festival at Bewdley Pines Golf Course this week. Played over 18 holes we had prizes for the “longest drive” and “nearest the pin” and of course we had 2 special prizes for Best Ladies Score – Akshama Prashara – and Best Mens Score – Shaun Grennan. We intend to hold our u3a Golf Group Summer competition again next year but

in the meantime will continue to play several times each month at a variety of courses in the area. Bewdley Pines, Kidderminster, Chesterton Valley, Warley Woods, Halfpenny Green, Himley etc, and for new members we have a Par 3 course and Driving Range at Kingswinford.

David Reeves



Best Ladies Score – Akshama Prashara

Singers Hill Synagogue visit 14 June 2023

A limited number of members were given a private evening tour of this beautiful building. Designed and built in 1856 by Architect Yeoville Thomason, in the ‘Restrained Italianate Cathedral’ style, it is the oldest functioning synagogue in the West Midlands. Recently awarded ‘Most Improved Place of Worship’ by English Heritage, it is the centre for the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation and has been the main place for Jewish worship in Birmingham and the Midlands for over 160 years.

Steve Newman, our guide, showed us the Torah Scrolls, which are kept behind the alter screens and taken out in rotation to be read at services. He then explained the many biblical scenes and symbols depicted in the stained-glass windows. At the end of the tour there was a Q&A session where we were encouraged to ask anything we liked. Steve said he was used to taking school groups around and had heard it all! Being devout himself, he admitted that observing the countless rules and regulations can be hard work at times. Hidden behind the Mailbox in Birmingham, this building is a hidden gem.

Brenda Smith

Learn, laugh, live!

AND FINALLY

OUTINGS & EVENTS

26th September Monthly Laughter Yoga Sessions with Merrie Maggie – see event notice for details.

30th September Amblecote Christian Centre afternoon – this is to raise awareness of our u3a and all that we have to offer with a slant on active living.

4th October Bristol Aerospace Museum Depart 8am, arrive 11am and depart 3pm. £37 or £38. Organiser Peter Orme.

8th December Christmas social

The Christmas Meal will be held at the Talbot Hotel at 12pm mid-day in their refurbished upstairs ballroom – see event notice on front page for more details.

More information from Brenda Stevenson.
brendastevenson53@gmail.com



"OK, one more time: Go home and log on to our website from your computer, create an account and purchase your ticket with your credit or debit card, download the ticket to a smartphone, then come back at the allocated time... Just what part of 'easier and more convenient' don't you get?"

GUEST SPEAKERS

The speakers for the next 3 months are:-

5th October

Kate Round with The Role of Women in the Glass Industry

2nd November

Peter Bates with Modern English Villages

7th December

Trish Bradley with Crafting for Communities

There is a food collection box at monthly meetings. The items will be donated to the local Food Bank for distribution to the less fortunate.

STOURBRIDGE u3a FACEBOOK GROUPS

For general information about our u3a
<https://www.facebook.com/Stourbridge-u3a-1346526112121975>

The Stourbridge u3a in Touch page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/548973319074793> (Closed group – by application only.)

Photography Group
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/247950222889366>

NATIONAL u3a FACEBOOK GROUP

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2833125070105668>

NATIONAL u3a REGULAR BULLETINS

<https://www.u3a.org.uk>

NATIONAL u3a NEWSLETTER

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>

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