

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON u3a

NEWSLETTER

Founded 2000

[Stratford-upon-Avon u3a: Home \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://Stratford-upon-Avon u3a: Home (u3asites.org.uk))

November 2023

This Month

Wednesday 29 November 2023

2 p.m. Methodist Church

Tuneful Tubes

David Wornham will tell us about the history of wind instruments, some more musical than others. David will demonstrate some of his collection.



Christmas Party Invitation

Please come to our “bring and share” Christmas Party

Wednesday 13th December 2.00

The Methodist Church Hall

Please bring a plate of finger food for four people

(Suggestions – buttered scones, sausage rolls, slices of cake, sandwiches, mince pies, whatever)

Dress Code – Christmas Jumpers, silly hats

Mini quizzes, games, singing, ukulele band, festive fun!

RSVP to news@stratfordu3a.org.uk



A very early

Happy Christmas

To you all

The committee would like to wish you a very happy Christmas, not to mention a Happy New Year as well. I know this is early but there will not be a newsletter in December.

Don't forget our December meeting on Wednesday 13 December (details on previous page)

There will be a newsletter in January, and our January speakers are Pamela Devine and Janet Hall who will be telling us about the Paintings of the Guild Hall Chapel. 2 p.m. Wednesday 24 January 2024 at the Methodist Church



HELP!

Please could 6 of you volunteer to arrive early and help to set up for our Christmas meeting, please let Maureen know at the meeting or you could email news@stratfordu3a.org.uk

Report of Special General Meeting 25th October 2023

48 members attended the Special General Meeting

The amendments to the Constitution were passed, these were

- Adding a preamble giving the historical dates and the present date of the Constitution.
- Amending the financial year end to 31st December annually.
- Amending the maximum time between the financial year end and the A.G.M. to 15 weeks.
- Rectifying some of the numbering.

All the changes were passed unanimously and the EGM lasted 11 minutes.

Stratford u3a meeting – Wednesday 25 October 2023 –

Speaker – Fran Sandham – “Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?” Report by Helen Elliott (Speaker Secretary)

Fran Sandham has walked solo across Africa, from West to East (Namibia's Skeleton Coast to Bagamoyo in Tanzania, 3,500 miles), the first person to do this, and is the author of a book about it – Traversa - so he has experience of the kind of explorations undertaken by Livingstone and Stanley, the subjects of this talk.

There is much controversy about the facts of their meeting, the famous greeting, and about their lives. David Livingstone was from a poor Scottish background, who became a doctor, then, in the 1840s, a medical missionary (not very successfully) and then he became an explorer in Africa and was the first person to cross sub-Saharan Africa, West to East. In the 1860s he set out to find the source of the White Nile but after a while, communications ceased and he was presumed dead!

Henry Morton Stanley was not what he seemed; indeed, he was a liar! He was born John Rowlands in Wales, a poor orphan who eventually landed in the U.S.A. and re-invented himself. He became a news reporter in the Wild West and also during the civil war, and he also reported on the war in Abyssinia. He met James Gordon Bennett Jr., owner of the New York Herald, who promised to fund him to find Livingstone! Actually, the funds never arrived and Stanley was forced to rely on the American consul (who had sent supplies that had never arrived to Livingstone) for a loan to continue the expedition.

Meanwhile, Livingstone was ill and starving, and looking in the wrong place for the source of the White Nile. Stanley's expedition was also ill-fated – malaria, rain and even local civil wars threatened to end it. However, reports of Livingstone's presence were true and they finally met in November 1871. Livingstone apparently said to Stanley, “You have brought me new life”. They spent 4 months together and got on well as they had much in common. They developed a sort of father-son relationship, and Stanley had his news scoop, although Gordon Bennett still failed to provide the promised funds.

Stanley went to England where he had a mixed reception. The Royal Geographical Society doubted his achievements, but Stanley lectured to the British Association in Brighton to great acclaim. Stanley's true identity was also revealed as relatives of his appeared, mainly to get money! However, Livingstone's daughter liked him, Queen Victoria met him and the resulting publicity and approval led to a change in his fortunes. The RGS awarded him a medal, and the famous greeting became a popular catchphrase although “Dr. Livingstone, I believe” was more likely. Stanley wrote a book about his expedition, but Livingstone died a year after the meeting. His heart was buried under a tree and his body was transported to England for burial in Westminster Abbey. Stanley was a pall bearer. Stanley made Livingstone's reputation and he was an inspiration to explorers. Stanley returned to Africa in the 1870s and confirmed Speke's conclusion about the source of the White Nile. Stanley was also knighted in 1904 and rose in British society.

Why did the story become so massive? Timing was one factor as the transatlantic telegraph cable enabled fast communication of news. The New York Herald's backing helped. The famous greeting was also considered funny, even though it probably was not quite correct. There is a monument to Livingstone at the spot where they met, and Livingstone's house is a little museum. We all learned a lot from this fact-filled and amusing talk.

This looks interesting—especially if you have things that need repairing.

Stratford Repair Café

If you have anything at home that needs repairing, and you're tempted to throw it away and buy new - have you considered getting a free repair at Stratford's Repair Café instead?

Once a month at Stratford Methodist Church (opposite Holy Trinity Church), volunteers repair things for free between 10am and 2pm.

The next event will be on Saturday December 2nd.

Visit www.bit.ly/StratfordRC to confirm the date and check details of the repairs they can attempt at the next event.

Typically they can repair clothing and other things that need sewing, bikes, electrical items, computers and other IT hardware and software, and things that need gluing and screwing. They also offer tool sharpening for garden tools, knives, scissors etc..

They're usually there on the first Saturday of each month, but not in January or February next year. Instead the first date in 2024 is January 20th.

It's a great way to get something repaired free, saving the cost of buying new and keeping things out of landfill.

This message came from Paul Fairburn, one of the founders of the Stratford Repair Café, do check the link above if you are interested. Your editor

French for the terrified

Because of the growth of Useful French

we have branched out



into a second group

*for those who need an even gentler, easier re-introduction
to the French they have forgotten*

1st and 3rd Thursdays 2pm - 3.30pm in Shottery

Contact Margaret on km27dews@gmail.com

J'ai peur  *donc j'y vais!*

WARNING : MAY CONTAIN GRAMMAR

NEWS FROM OUR INTEREST GROUPS

Brush up your German

We met around a cosy log fire to hear about Anne's visit to Berlin and Potsdam, Angela's stay in rural France and Jo's wider European travels. We also discussed floods, dog fostering and one way of digging yourself out of a hole. Und das alles bei leckerem Kaffee und Kuchen!

Chaucer: Troilus and Cryseide

Before pressing on with our tale, we considered the close relationship between rhetoric and 14th century poetry. We noted how Chaucer used rhetorical techniques to create distinctive characters with a convincing inner life, and we traced a connection between Diomedes, the Pardoner and the Wife of Bath to modern fiction via Shakespearean drama. To do this we took soliloquies from Henry VI iii, Richard III and Macbeth and compared them with a passage of conversation from The Masters, by C.P. Snow.

French for the Terrified

We came with our accounts of a typical day, making good use of vocabulary we have already met; we learned a lot about Mary's cats! After revising some of the verbs in the present tense (including negatives, questions and commands) and filling gaps in sentences with the correct forms, we finished with a song by Guy Béart with many of the phrases we have been practising: *Le matin je m'éveille en chantant*. If only!



Piano Group

We met once in the church where we used the grand piano, a lovely tone but a new experience for some of us. We have a new member, Fay, who cannot read music but plays pieces by ear and played us a composition of her own. Back in Room 1 with our upright, the rest of us continue to try to master whatever pieces come our way. Gershwin, Kabalevsky, Mozart, Billy Joel and Don McLean have all featured this time.

Useful French



We usually begin by telling of something we have done since we last met. Recently we practised pronunciation and comprehension by reading aloud a clever little tale about Le Petit Nicolas, a sort of French Just William. We met some useful expressions which we used to answer questions. We have also been working on reflexive verbs. A guest appearance from Jocelyne, une vraie Française, was much appreciated. She introduced us to a new song and this led on to our researching l'affaire Dreyfus. *Génial!*

Stratford History Group

Our numbers continue to grow. This month we welcomed Sarah Aspley, CEO of the Town Trust, who gave us an excellent presentation on the long history of the Trust and its current role in the life of Stratford. It awards grants of £2m a year to a wide range of local charities for core work and specific projects, as well as offering opportunities for volunteering. And much more! Helen has written some splendid notes, available to anyone contacting km27dews@gmail.com. Membership of the Trust is very worthwhile and free to anyone living within the boundary of Stratford Town via a simple membership form on its website. Do consider joining!



Photo from Matt Goodman

More news from the groups.....

Spanish Intermediate

Most of the Spanish group were away 'travelling' in October and we did not have a meeting during that month.

The Spanish group met at the beginning of November. We welcomed a new member and another new member will be joining us in January. The group is now being supported by a native Spanish speaker, Maria, who led a group discussion on Christmas and New Year traditions in Spain. It was a lively and informative discussion and the handouts that Maria gave us should support further 'learning and understanding'. The meeting finished with a quiz.

A NEW DEPARTURE FOR STRATFORD-UPON-AVON u3a

We are starting a Rummikub [club](#) for members from December.

For those of you unfamiliar with the game, it is a mixture of the traditional game of 'Rummy' but played with tiles, a bit like Mah Jong. It is played around tables with a maximum of four people per table.

It is easy to master and support/teaching will be given. The new leader of the group will be new member, Juliet Grundy, fresh from running a similar group in her former home in Chipping Campden.

We are meeting at Huffkins on Bridge Street, they are giving us the space for free. Thank you Huffkins!

We will be able to buy teas and coffees at half time (we don't need orange quarters as we won't be expending that much energy).

Please note: the space is upstairs, so is not suitable for people with reduced mobility.

Please come to the initial meeting Friday 1st December 2023, 2 for 2.15 and let us know in advance if you plan to attend.

If you have Rummikub set, please bring it along with you.

Hope to see you there

[Maureen](#)

A few for the foodies

Eating out is a nightmare. I never eat snails; I only like fast food. I've tried tripe, liver and kidneys, and they're all offal. Today I said no to the giant duck on the menu as the bill would have been huge, and I couldn't risk pasta as I knew my partner would help himself off my plate - he's always been a penne pincher. So I ordered roe: it was a spawntaneous decision. And did I ever tell you about the time I accidentally swallowed some invisible ink and the doctor couldn't see me..... ?

U3a Tea Rota January to September 2024

Month	Group
January	Keep Fit
February	Walking Group (ref Michelle)
March	Latin Intermediate
April	Piano
May	Chaucer (ref Patricia)
June	Portuguese
July	Playreading 1
August	Italian
September	Useful French (ref Margaret)

u3a Choir Christmas Charity Concert

in aid of the

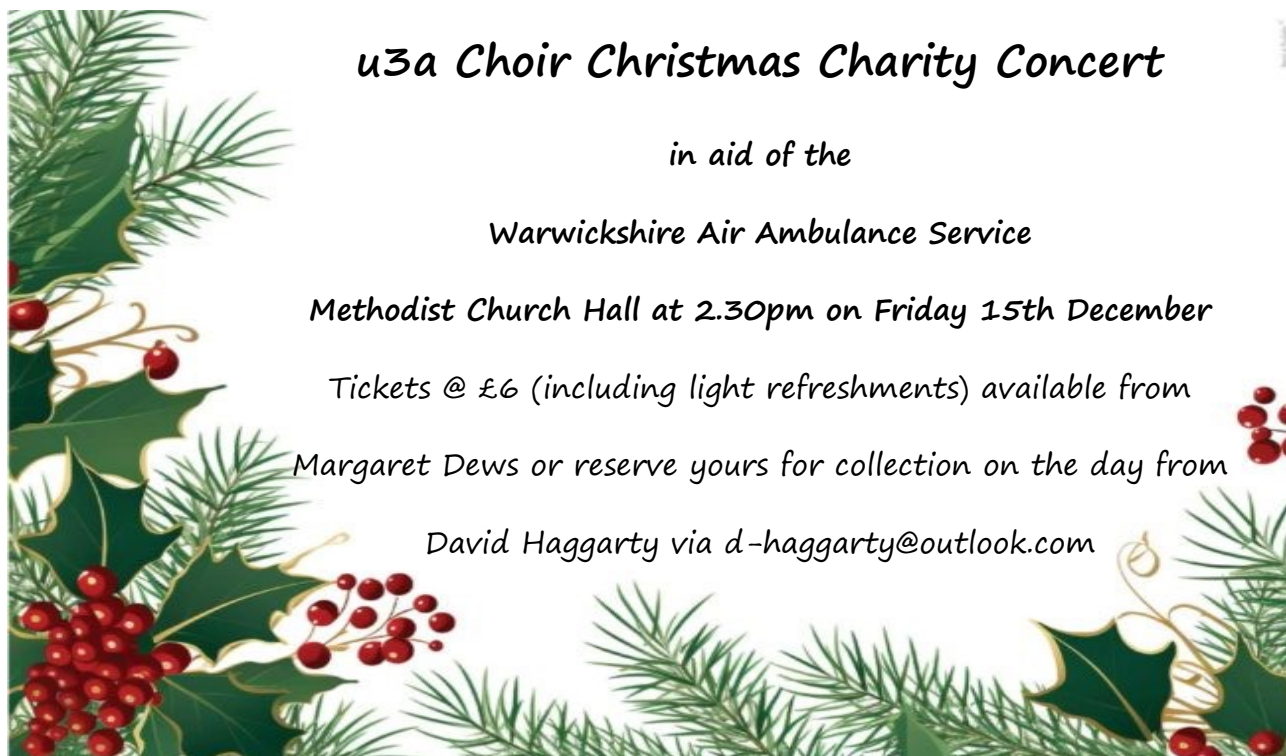
Warwickshire Air Ambulance Service

Methodist Church Hall at 2.30pm on Friday 15th December

Tickets @ £6 (including light refreshments) available from

Margaret Dews or reserve yours for collection on the day from

David Haggarty via d-haggarty@outlook.com



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON u3a - SPEAKERS FOR 2023-4

**We have an interesting and varied programme of talks and entertainment for you.
Please come along, and tell your friends!**

29 NOVEMBER 2023 - DAVID WORNHAM - "TUNEFUL TUBES" - A light-hearted demonstrated history of world-wide musical wind instruments.

13 DECEMBER 2023 – CHRISTMAS MEETING – Bring & Share Pot Luck tea

24 JANUARY 2024 – PAMELA DEVINE and JANET HALL – THE PAINTINGS OF THE GUILD-HALL CHAPEL

28 FEBRUARY 2024 – CYRIL BENNIS - THE SWANS OF STRATFORD

27 MARCH 2024 –AGM

24 APRIL 2024 – NICK MARTIN - STORIES OF OUR BRITISH MAMMALS

29 MAY 2024 – KATY BELLAMY – "SLEEP, PERCHANCE TO DREAM" – The Neuroscience of Snoozing.

26 JUNE 2024 – JANICE FISHER - CHARLES ROBERT ASHBEE – ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT

31 JULY 2024 – RICHARD CHURCHLEY - LOCAL PLACENAMES IN WORCESTERSHIRE AND WARWICKSHIRE

28 AUGUST 2024 - ABBY WATSON – DOGS TRUST SUPPORTER RELATIONS OFFICER - DOGS TRUST AND ITS WORK

25 SEPTEMBER 2024 – ERIC LAWLEY – CHEDHAM'S YARD

30 OCTOBER 2024 – CATS PROTECTION AND ITS WORK

27 NOVEMBER 2024 – SUSAN DRAGE – RECYCLING WITH A DIFFERENCE. UPCYCLING AND CRAFTING OPPORTUNITIES.