

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON u3a

NEWSLETTER

Founded 2000

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October 2023

RE M I N D E R

Special General Meeting

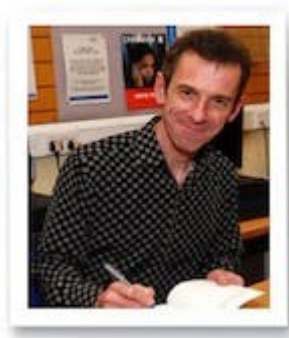
Wednesday 25th October 13.45

Methodist Centre Stratford-upon-Avon

You should have received the paperwork about this very short SGM. It is to move the financial year end from January 11th to December 31st. The subject should be non-contentious, and the meeting should be over in 15 minutes to allow us to hear our speaker tell us about

“Dr Livingstone, I presume?”

PLEASE COME ALONG!



THIS MONTH

Wednesday 25 October

'Dr Livingston I presume'

Fran Sandham will tell us about Stanley's meeting with Dr Livingston.

To find out more, join us at the Methodist Church

at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 25 October 2023

This talk will follow the the special general meeting at 1.45 p.m.



Next 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.

This month's giggle

"I always take my wife morning tea in my pyjamas. But is she grateful? No, she says she'd rather have it in a cup." – Eric Morecambe

Please do send me your contributions to news@savu3a.org.uk

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)



THANK YOU!

To the very many members who've replied about Gift Aid.

We really appreciate it!

Stratford-upon-Avon u3a Local History Group meeting – Thursday 14 September 2023

Speaker - Richard Thomas – Clocks, with particular reference to Stratford.

13 members of the group attended the talk at the Methodist Church Hall, and we learned a lot about clock making, maintenance and history. Richard had a varied career in metallurgy, paint chemistry, and sales before receiving careers advice to avoid managerial roles! So, he worked with model railways for 5 years and then, in 2000, bought clocks to mend. As there were no clock makers in the vicinity he trained with the British Horological Institute and began to make and repair clocks, continuing for 15 years. He has worked on the one in the bar of the RSC theatre, the Shakespeare Memorial Fountain, and the one in Marks & Spencer (which is not on public view), for example. He has tried to encourage more people to work on clocks, but watches are more popular! He gave up working aged 71, especially when the Fountain's steep stepladder became too hazardous!

Richard mentioned other local clocks of interest. These included the Guild Chapel and St Peter's Church at Aston Cantlow, the latter said to have been made by a blacksmith in the 14th Century, as such it seems to be the oldest clock in our area. It was replaced by another blacksmith made clock in the 16th. century. There was also one on the old Market Cross (where Barclays Bank is now). The one in the Guild Chapel still has the old escapement and pendulum but has electronic assistance to keep it on time. This clock was used to sound the curfew at 8 o'clock in the evening to remind people, in the thatched era, to cover their fires, after the terrible, destructive fires in the 16th. century. The one from the Market Cross had a bell and when the building became a bank, the bell was moved to Bell Court.

The Fountain clock (the memorial was paid for by an American, George Childs, to celebrate the relationship between America and this country) was built in 1887. It has a small door to gain access to the clock which is now corrected by electronics, after Richard's retirement. Its pendulum can be seen from the Oxfam shop corner.

The Red Horse had a 30 hours long case clock made by Thomas Sharp. When M&S bought the building, it had to keep the clock and Richard still maintains it. Richard showed us some pictures of local clocks. Richard hopes that it could be included in a Heritage Open Day in the future, but it is in the staff area!

Due to technical difficulties, we could not see all of the presentation's pictures. Richard may be able to do the talk again at a later date, and it was also suggested that we might have a walking tour of some of the clocks. It was a most unusual and interesting talk and Richard was heartily thanked.

Helen Elliott 15 September 2023.

Stratford u3a **Local History** and **Free Time** Groups – visits

Three members from these groups, Helen Elliott, Matt Goodman and Joy Wilcox, went to the Town Hall on Saturday 16 September for its Heritage Open Day. We were able to see rooms that are not normally open to the public, such as the council chamber and the Mayor's parlour. We talked to the current and previous mayors as well as other very informative council representatives.

The Town Hall is a treasure trove of artifacts from the past as well as being a workplace for the council. The Town Hall, especially the ballroom, is used for events, such as exhibitions (e.g., the Queen's Jubilee in 2022) talks, concerts, and weddings, and it was where the Stratford u3as held an open day last year. See attached photograph, thanks to Matt, of Joy and



Friendly French Conversation

I am pleased to report that our group has met again today (16th October) and welcomed another new member. The atmosphere is relaxed with everyone present having the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. If anyone is unsure of any vocabulary or uncertain of a grammar point, the rest of the group work together to find an acceptable solution. We are, after all, friendly by name and friendly by nature.

Janet Reid

Latin

At our last meeting in October we tackled two more pieces by Horace. Writing to his farm bailiff, he again praises life on his country farm, contrasting it with the dubious temptations of life in the city. The Latin was some of the most difficult we have tackled, but we had a real sense of achievement afterwards. Next time we shall turn our



Intermediate Latin

We continue to meet twice a month and are steadily working our way through the Oxford Latin course. In our recent encounters with the subjunctive and absolute ablatives, we have learned about the battle at Phillipi in 42 BC, where Cassius and Brutus fought against Mark Anthony. The hero of our story is Quintus who later became Horace and wrote the odes the other group have been studying.

NEWS FROM OUR INTEREST GROUPS

Brush up your German



On his last appearance before wintering on the continent, Ulrik introduced us to **Moin** and **Moin Moin**, familiar forms of greeting in North Germany for over 200 years. We look forward to saying **Moin Moin!** to Ulrik again when he returns.

Anne entertained us with a tale of her trip on a steam train. Next month she will have been to Berlin, so we're looking forward to hearing about that. The Margarets talked about the wealth of music available in Stratford and the amazing musical talent of the Kanneh Mason family. Rosel, whose warm hospitality we enjoyed with cookies around the log fire, helped us along the way and rounded things off. We laughed a lot!

Here is your German translation homework: (request from your editor)

Moin! ist ein gängiger Gruß in Norddeutschland. Anderswo klingt es komisch.

Chaucer

This month we began Book V of Troilus and Criseyde in which Criseyde leaves Troy and is escorted to the Greek camp. Here she meets Diomedes who begins to address her in terms of courtly love. We compared Chaucer's account of her reception with Shakespeare's version, where some of the welcoming Greeks were positively lascivious. (We recalled the Spanish Football President's embrace!) We also discussed the reader's perception of time in the book. Could it really be three years since this love affair began?



Led by Roger Butler, a noted expert on canals, ten of us took a short walk from the Bancroft and the canal basin to the Warwick Road lock. We began with the background to the canal's construction: why and when was it built? who paid for it? and followed its growth, decline and reconstruction through the years. There was so much to take in.

A couple of facts you may not know: 1. there were originally TWO basins, the second one larger, now filled in where the theatre stands; the truncated stretch of canal where the trip boat is berthed is all that remains of the waterway which joined the two basins; 2. the inventor of the first canal lock was Leonardo da Vinci! Contrary to expectations, we were blessed with dry weather. Everyone enjoyed the tour.

French for the Terrified

J'ai peur donc j'y vais!

An offshoot of Useful French, this is a new group which offers what it says on the tin. We meet in Shotton on the first and third Thursday afternoons of the month and have started at quite a low level, revising simple verbs and phrases using flash cards, stories and songs. Your terrifying French homework is to translate our motto above.

Stratford History Group

Christmas Shopping Afternoon in Birmingham

Thursday 23rd November 2023

We have some places on our Johnsons Ballet Coach to give members a lift to Birmingham for an afternoon of Christmas shopping.

You will be dropped off at the Birmingham Hippodrome at 1pm and collected at the Hippodrome at 4.45pm

The Bull Ring Shopping Centre is, according to the map, a four-minute walk from the Hippodrome.

Tickets are £20 return, payable in advance.

Please email savu3a@gmail.com for further details

'A thank you and a plea

Thank you to everyone who submits articles for inclusion in the newsletter. I do my best to include everything that you send, but please could you make sure I receive everything by the deadline of the 17th of each month. **Next month the deadline is 17 November**, you are welcome to send items for inclusion any time before the deadline

I reserve the right to carry over, or possibly not include late items depending on the space available

Finally please could you try to make articles no more than 400 words, sent in Word and written in calibri size 12 font (this is about half a page of text) Photos are always welcome. This makes it easier to include your items in their original format.

Thank you again, please send me your items, jokes, puzzles or queries to me at news@savu3a.org.uk

