



University of the Third Age

u3a
learn, laugh, live



Stratford-upon-Avon u3a

Newsletter

November/December 2022

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

email: savu3a@gmail.com

Next newsletter will be published
approx. 20th January

Items for the January newsletter to

km27dews@gmail.com

<https://u3asites.org.uk/stratforduponavon/home>

NEXT MEETING on Wednesday 30 November will be preceded by a
Special General Meeting at 1.30pm for members only : see page 4

2.15pm on Wed 30 November: Christmas Songs through the Ages

The ever popular Richard Churchley, with audience participation.

Open to visitors as usual

Wednesday 14 December, 2pm: Festive Christmas Quiz

Devised and presented by Maureen and Mark: read more on page 3

Wednesday 25th January: The Graffiti on Shakespeare's Walls

An illustrated talk by Pam Devine, the local expert on the Guild Chapel graffiti. Pam is the daughter of one of our members. Unmissable !

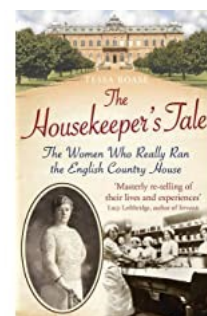
Report on October meeting: Ruth Smith on VICTORIAN HOUSEKEEPING

Ruth began by telling us of her grandmother who, with her tin trunk at 12 years old was sent into service with a rich lady, to be trained as a cook. Cooks could be notoriously jealous and fearsome. Her employer was often ill and/or pregnant, so it was a chaotic household with servants running out of control. Chaos among the nappy buckets! On the lady's death she opted to train as a seamstress, aware that rich ladies with new dresses were always in need of new stays. But as a maid of all work her duties included lighting the washboiler at 4am and ensuring that clothes were washed, mangled and hanging out to dry by 7am.

Ruth's other grandmother was very bright and keen to become a pupil teacher, but her father insisted on her leaving school at 14 to help him with his milk business, cleaning out the parlours.

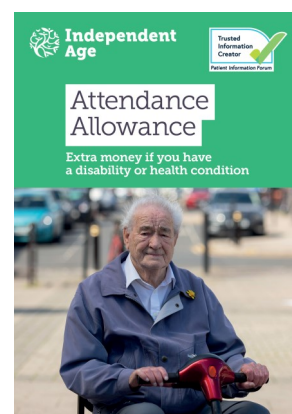
Widows too often needed to work as housekeepers to make ends meet: a housekeeper could earn up to £50 a year, more than the best paid male servants. H G Wells was ashamed of his mother for choosing such a lowly position and wrote that she was the 'worst housekeeper who ever lived'.

For further insights into a range of these lives, we were recommended Tessa Boase's book 'The Housekeeper's Tale: The Women Who Really Ran the English Country House', a lively social history as seen through the eyes of a number of women in service between the mid eighteenth and twentieth centuries. One such worked for an upwardly mobile family who had inherited Erddig Hall and put on up to four charity events weekly. Their housekeeper found herself cooking day after day for up to 170 guests a week, including children and bandsmen. A favourite treat was lark pie! Teas were often set up outside, then involving a great scramble to get inside when the heavens opened.



Display of Information Guides

After what was a rather disappointing short talk members were encouraged to examine the leaflets and brochures in the foyer which Denise has been collecting. We have guides on health care, financial and other support, managing energy, ways of accessing help of all kinds, and so on. These guides will be available at future meetings. Feel free to take away anything useful and ask if there is anything else you would like. As an example, for some of the help offered by VASA - and its needs - see page 5 of this newsletter.



NEWS FROM OUR INTEREST GROUPS

Ambling

On 9th November we had a successful walk in Alcester which Olive had previously planned for October. Buses ran as scheduled, the weather was dry and ten members enjoyed the walk through Abbey fields. At the nature reserve two brave members made a detour while the rest of us continued on the planned footpath. We all met up and walked into the town for a refreshment break before taking the bus back to Stratford. There will be no December walk as the date coincides with the U3A Christmas meeting. **Joyce Steckel (268088) and Olive Puzey (762281)**

Chaucer

We examined the theory that the difference in characterisation between Troilus and Criseyde could be due to the generic distinction between Mediaeval Romance and something more akin to the modern novel. Whereas Troilus is a typical Romance hero, Criseyde's more flawed and paradoxical persona places her alongside such later heroines as Becky Sharp. EM Forster's definition of fictional characters as 'word masses' led us to explore the relationship between style and genre via Practical Criticism of Kublai Khan and CP Snow's The Masters.

Folk Dance



Our second meeting took place on 8th November and was again a most enjoyable and social occasion. We had a very fraught start when our caller phoned in to say he was not feeling too good and was unsure he could make it. Very luckily Graham Knight, a new group member who is an experienced caller, was able to bring his music and was happy to help us out. In the end Julian was able to join us, so he called during the first half and Graham after our coffee break. This gave us a varied and enjoyable programme. Many thanks to both of them for going the extra mile.

The next meeting will be on December 13th at 10.30am in St Andrew's Parish Hall, Shotton. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Sue Crowley at sue.crowley25@googlemail.com. I'm very pleased to confirm that we are pencilled into the diary at the hall for the second Tuesday of the month for the whole of 2023.

Gardening

We met for lunch at the Stratford Garden Centre in Clifford Chambers and discussed ideas for next year, starting in January with a buffet at Doreen's home. Highlights will include a visit to Morton Hall again for the Tulip Festival in April, a garden in a reclaimed quarry in Baginton in the summer and an autumn visit to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Outings will be intermingled with visits to some of our own gardens plus seed and plant exchanges.

Piano : Late Extra! See page 4

Spanish

We played *Would I Lie to You* in Spanish, and the most unlikely statements were often true. Yes, Ulrik really did do that (you'll have to ask him!) and Maria did get locked out of a sauna in the nude in winter. However, despite her serious misdemeanours Margaret is not named on Stasi files as an enemy of the German Democratic Republic.

Stratford History Group

We had an excellent visit to the Guild Chapel where Pam Devine and Janet Hall gave us the history of the Guild, the building and its paintings before analysing the huge Doom and other paintings. Close study of the details, especially of those hidden behind panelling, was fascinating. Pam and Janet are both passionate about their subject and are continuing their research with undimmed enthusiasm. We look forward to Pam's talk on the graffiti in January.



Ukulele (see our Christmas Rehearsal picture on page 1)

We play for our own amusement twice a week and have also entertained at a few gigs. At the Frog in Bidford in June we were very well received with a standing ovation from a WWII veteran who took a fancy to one of our lady players! Encouraged, we have played twice at Icknield Court (sheltered housing) where the audience joined in singing well known songs. At the u3a Open Day at Stratford Town Hall we received more standing ovations. Well, we claim standing ovations as quite a few of the audience were standing! Future gigs include the Jolly Teapot Café in Bidford on 24th November at 10.30, Icknield Court Christmas Party on 13th December at 1pm, Stratford Christmas Market on 11th December at 2pm outside the Town Hall and our u3a Christmas meeting on 14th.

Useful French

We have made a slow start because of illness, but there is much enthusiasm. We began by revising nationalities and asking questions, described a cartoon and came away with homework: a topic to prepare and a translation.

DECEMBER MEETING

Our December entertainment is a Festive Quiz with Maureen and her partner, Mark Du Feu, as quiz masters.

There will also be festive entertainment, Christmas cake and mince pies - and prizes! Many of the questions will be Christmas related but there will also be other questions of a more general nature. People are invited to come along alone, in pairs or groups and may join with others on the day to form teams of four. The organisers will have a system for making up teams on a random basis should people wish.

Mark and Maureen have been running quizzes for fifteen years and promise an afternoon of fun. They have dismissed rumours of the top prize being a balloon ride as merely "hot air".

TEA ROTA (Groups)

November 30th	Ukulele Group
December 14th	The Committee
January 25th	Piano Group



OTHER NEWS AND NOTICES

Bereavement Support Group

The Bereavement Support Group, led by Gina Lodge, meets in Holy Trinity Parish Centre on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm when people can talk to others in similar circumstances. It is non religious and all are welcome whether they are of any faith or none. **But please note: there will be no meeting this coming January**

www.WORK-SHOP.org.uk

Work-Shop is looking for volunteers who would be interested in working on work projects with adults who have learning difficulties or autism. Below is a video link which tells you more.

Richard J Weaver,
Project Coordinator, Rye House,
Clifford Park Business Centre,
Stratford upon Avon, CV37 8HW
01789 267786

WORK-SHOP
Purposeful Work Activities for Adults with Learning Disability and Autism

We Believe... adults with a learning disability or autism have a right to live purposeful, stimulating and active lives.

We Create... an inspiring work environment through a diverse range of activities promoting inclusivity in the workplace

We Discover... opportunities to take part in productive, quality work, through ambitious projects, providing personal growth and development

www.work-shop.org.uk

WORK-SHOP
Purposeful Work Activities for Adults with Learning Disability and Autism

Based in Stratford upon Avon, ECO Work-Shop is a community interest company set up in 2013.

We provide a supported environment to enable adults with a learning disability or autism to carry out a range of work-based activities

Scan the QR Code to see our video on...

Phone: 01789 267786

Rye House, Clifford Park Business Centre, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 8HW

www.facebook.com/eco-workshop www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PrBzCC3ZrM [Twitter @WorkshopCIC](https://twitter.com/WorkshopCIC)

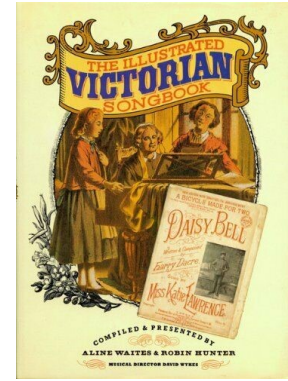
www.work-shop.org.uk

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PrBzCC3ZrM>

NEWS FROM OUR INTEREST GROUPS: LATE EXTRA!

Piano

We began with a long and interesting discussion on different piano teaching techniques and learning methods. Performances included Clementi, another favourite Bach prelude and a York Bowen 'impressionistic' study. These were followed by something very new: Janet played a piano accompaniment to a Victorian music hall song and we all joined in singing the chorus. Great fun!



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Important – Special General Meeting of All Members

30th November, 1.30pm
Methodist Church Hall

Please use your vote at the Special General Meeting (SGM) in the most important issue to challenge our u3a since we began. We need to resolve the issue of having too few committee members for too many jobs and, indeed, too few to run the u3a effectively.

This problem can be solved either by having people step up to join our committee or else by seeking a merger with another u3a. You may vote in person on the day or else by sending in the postal voting form.

If you have any concerns or questions about the SGM please email me - maureenbsavu3a@gmail.com.

Best wishes
Maureen Bourniquel
Chair



Your u3a needs you !

A personal note from the editor

Most of you know me. I've been a member here for nearly 17 years and I love Stratford u3a. I lead six groups and belong to more, produce this monthly newsletter and Herald reports, edit our website and update leaflets. Having worked flat out this summer to organise our September Open Day, I would be devastated to see Stratford u3a fold.

But we have no Vice Chair, no Secretary, no Minutes Secretary, no Catering Officer, no Publicity Officer and in the New Year we will have no Treasurer. According to the Constitution we cannot continue without a Treasurer. If we cannot fill this post, let alone the others, we will need to merge to survive. If you want to keep your groups going, to keep in contact with your u3a friends and return to the days when we had outings and theatre visits, you can - by voting accordingly. By joining forces we would not lose our identity: we would make new friends and become a flourishing new organisation with a wider range of groups and activities. And we would have a full committee, a great relief to those members of our present committee still standing who are tired and struggling to cope.

You will have read Maureen's notice. This is very important. Do come along on 30th and have your say. If you are not able to attend please use your postal vote. If you don't have access to a printer, let me know and I'll drop a form in to you. Final details of a merged u3a would be worked out between us once agreement has been reached. Do vote. Please don't see us close. Thank you

Margaret

km27dews@gmail.com/209900



Donations Welcome

Community Transport

Volunteer drivers provide
Community Transport
Wheelchair Loans



Community Activities & Services

Memory Clubs for people
living with dementia
Carers' Café Support for All Carers
Community Allotments



Dementia Café
Baby Brunch Club



Singing Groups
Coffee Mornings



Sit & Get Fit



CHANGING LIVES BY
CONNECTING
PEOPLE



www.vasa.org.uk

VASA is a charity providing vital services across south Warwickshire & Rugby borough, enabling people to live their lives fully.

hello@vasa.org.uk 01789 262889

VASA | CHANGING LIVES BY CONNECTING PEOPLE Charity number: 1067584



Chit Chat Club

10am-12pm

Every Tuesday

Morrisons Cafe, Alcester Rd,
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 9DA

Come join us for
a Cuppa and chat!

For more info visit
www.vasa.org.uk
or call
01789 777986
or email
janis@vasa.org.uk



Donations Welcome

VASA | CHANGING LIVES BY CONNECTING PEOPLE



vasa

CHANGING LIVES BY
CONNECTING
PEOPLE

Volunteers Needed

**I Want To Volunteer
But I'm Worried About
What's Involved**



Volunteering with VASA is about having fun while doing something worthwhile for your local community. There's a role you'll enjoy with VASA.

**I Don't Have Much Spare
Time And I Don't Want
To Let Anyone Down**

It's totally flexible around you. An hour every so often - when you want - makes a difference. That's the joy of volunteering with VASA

Community Transport

Drivers: using your car for community transport - 45p mileage paid. Taking people to appointments they would struggle to get to on their own.

Telephone Operators: comfortable talking to people on the phone and typing information on a computer in a warm, friendly office. Full training is given. And tea or coffee with biscuits are always available for you!

Community Activities & Groups

- Activities Helpers:**
- serve a lunch
 - paint nails
 - chat & make a cup of tea
 - sing a song
 - play an instrument

Come and see us at Stratford Tesco on 7 January

Let's Have A Chat hello@vasa.org.uk
 01789 262889
www.vasa.org.uk

Charity number: 1067584



Wednesday 2 - 4pm



Donations Welcome

Ettington Lodge, Wellesbourne CV35 9AJ



Contact Janis for further information:

janis@vasa.org.uk 01789 777986

Do you need transport? We have a community transport service.

Would you like to volunteer as a driver? Contact us for a chat about our volunteering opportunities: hello@vasa.org.uk or 01789 262889

www.vasa.org.uk

Charity number: 1067584