



Monthly meetings are held at the Greig Hall, Alcester  
at 2.30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month



**Notes from the Chair**

**David West**

Nothing to report this month as the Chairman is on holiday

**CARDIFF HOLIDAY**

A huge thank you to John & Lyn Pickering for organising another very successful holiday, this time to Cardiff. After a pleasant interlude on the way at the NT Tredegar House (marvelling at an immense shovel table in the orangery – over 350 years old and the longest single plank oak tabletop in Britain at over 12m), we enjoyed a variety of trips over the next few days.



- ◆ A guided city tour by coach learning about Cardiff’s impressive industrial development, based on the trading of prized high-quality coal from the South Wales valleys which was exported all over the world, with Cardiff determining the price of the world’s coal and the place where the first ever £1million deal was agreed, the port handling more coal than any other port in the world.
- ◆ Tours of the Millennium Building and the Senedd.
- ◆ St Fagan’s National Museum of History
- ◆ A boat trip around the harbour and the River Taf.
- ◆ An energetic afternoon at Castell Coch, Wales’ Victorian fairy-tale castle, climbing the challenging spiral staircases up the towers, followed by a memorable evening at the Bethesda Chapel in Treorchy where we were given a warm Welsh welcome by the famous male voice choir and treated to a rehearsal & a mini concert.
- ◆ A tour of The Royal Mint at Llantrisant provided the finale on the last day before boarding our Disney-themed coach back to Alcester and bidding farewell to our engaging Lancastrian driver, Mark for whom nothing was too much trouble, now off to Paris Disney with the coach.

John & Lyn’s hard work in the planning and supervising the holiday cannot be overestimated and we hope that, over the next twelve months, they will muster the energy & enthusiasm for another trip in 2025!

**Programme for 2024**

1 October	Chris Hanson	Fire Safety in the Home
5 November	Nick Martin WWT	10-year transformation of a garden to a wildlife haven
3 December	Richard Churchley	Christmas Songs Through the Ages

Chairman	David West	<a href="mailto:chair.u3aalcester@gmail.com">chair.u3aalcester@gmail.com</a>
Vice-Chairman	Vacancy	<a href="mailto:vicechair.u3aalcester@gmail.com">vicechair.u3aalcester@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Jean Morgan	<a href="mailto:treasurer.u3aalcester@gmail.com">treasurer.u3aalcester@gmail.com</a>
Assistant Treasurer	Linda Randell	
Secretary/Minutes Sec	Sue Robertson	
Membership Secretary	Lyn Pickering	<a href="mailto:membership.u3aalcester@gmail.com">membership.u3aalcester@gmail.com</a>
Groups Coordinator	Vacancy	
Speaker Team Co-ordinator	Linda Randell	
Committee Members	Val Hamblin	Karyl Rees
Newsletter	Bronwen Bunting	Karen Dowman
Web: Manager - Lindsay Evans	<a href="http://u3asites.org.uk/alcester">http://u3asites.org.uk/alcester</a>	Only members can join groups
	Annual Sub: £20.00	



## THEATRE TRIPS

Joe White ([joe\\_patwhite@msn.com](mailto:joe_patwhite@msn.com))

The following shows have been booked and the lists will be at the October meeting. Reserves are welcome and often obtain a ticket when a member needs to cancel so add your name to the reserves if you would like to go.

**19 October 2024** “**The History Boys**” at **Malvern Theatre** £44 per ticket (Ref: T10)  
The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary production of Alan Bennett’s brilliant modern classic.

**SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2024** “**Birdsong**” at **Malvern Theatre** £40 per ticket (Ref: T11)  
Sebastian Faulk’ epic story of love and loss returns to the stage (Age 14 plus)

## INTEREST GROUP NEWS

### GARDEN LOVERS

Janet Allely

No meeting was arranged for September as the date coincided with the u3a holiday but it was suggested that garden lovers not on the holiday might like to make their own arrangements to meet at Hillers Garden Centre at Dunnington. They have interesting gardens and a secret hide for watching wildlife as well as a good cafe for a cup of tea and plenty of parking

### CHURCH VISITS

Chris Baker

**Our August visit featured two ‘St James’ Churches.** The first was the pretty building in **Weethley**, a small church perched on top of a hill on the ridgeway with stunning views of the surrounding Worcestershire countryside. We were welcomed with coffee and biscuits kindly provided by the church warden and her husband. Weethley Church is a 19th century stone building which replaced a dilapidated timber structure. A walk around the lovely, well-maintained churchyard offered reflection on psalm 23. We then moved on to St James, **Harvington**, a Grade 1 listed building with origins dating back to 1100. Renovations and restorations have left many clues but also mysteries as to how the church looked in the past. It has a distinctive spire, not because it was built in 1855 but because in 1947 it was clad in copper and is now a noticeable green colour. On the edge of the churchyard is a Grade 1 listed dovecote which is sadly falling down. After our enjoyable visits the group of fifteen had a sociable lunch at Hillers Farm Cafe. **The group is taking a break in September with the next visit on 22 October.**

### CRAFTS

Lynda Lamb

September's Craft Group was small in numbers due to some people being poorly & late holidays etc. It was a shame that many potential newbies to our group weren't able to join us. This also meant I had over prepped kits for our September project. However, the ladies who did join us all enjoyed themselves & made some beautiful notelet boxed sets. **October's project will be to make Christmas gift bags as the festive season is only 12 weeks away!**

### HISTORY GROUP

Lynda Matheson

During lockdown Lynne Yates and her late husband, John, were inspired by “**A House in Time**” to research the stories of a row of grand villas and their occupants. The villas were in Sutton Road, Erdington and remembered (just) by Lynne and John from their childhoods.

The development of the row began in c.1858 and continued for about 20 years. The houses were large and had grounds of up to 11/2 acres. Among the original residents were the founder of Ansell’s Brewery, the first proprietor of HP Sauce, Edwin Moore, and Julius Chatwyn, the noted Birmingham architect. We also learnt of the high infant mortality rate, mourning drapers, and the dangers of working in the armaments industry.

The houses gradually declined, especially after the first world war when servants became scarce. The row was eventually demolished in the 1950s and replaced by 7 tower blocks.

This was a fascinating talk and very well received by those fortunate enough to hear it. **Our next meeting will be on 17 October when David Woodrow will talk about the European interaction with West Africa.**

### JAZZ & BIG BAND SOUND

Bob Applegarth

For our September meeting, members brought recordings that conjured up **memories of summer**. Several remembered listening & dancing at the Upton Jazz Festival, playing numbers from Bob Oliver's Band, Chris Barber,

Monty Sunshine & Kenny Ball. Others remembered summer with pieces by Errol Garner, Bill Evans, Stan Getz, Benny Goodman bringing more memoirs - summer walks & summer swims. As usual, a good selection of music on a wet & non-summer like afternoon!

#### THE ELASTIC BAND

John Pickering

The

next meeting will be on **Wednesday 25 September (Contacts: John Pickering or Chris Capstick)**

#### MUSIC APPRECIATION

Jan Rowe.

On a very wet afternoon we heard Tony's very lively programme which included Tomas Luis Victoria's "Salve Regina" Mass for eight voices, Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring, and Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue. After our tea break we enjoyed Ex Cathedra singing "Ay Andar!" by Juan de Araujo, "The Chairman Dances" by John Adams and finally Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Waters". **Our next meeting is on 30th October at Malt Mill Lane Community Centre at 2pm with a presentation by Dave Allman..**



#### SINGING FOR PLEASURE

we will start again on **26th September.**

Chrissie Capstick

#### PHILOSOPHY

Peter Tugwell

Our September meeting considered the part imagination plays in aesthetics, when we discussed this question: **'Is imagination necessary or merely useful in helping us in our appreciation of a work of art?'** Trying to pin down what imagination was proved difficult – clearly it had some sort of relationship with dreams and memory, but was it merely an aspect of thinking with another name? Moving on from that, we looked at several well-known works of art and discussed subjective and objective views – that is of the artist and the viewer, and it was clear that both were important in relation to emotional engagement, the symbolism, allegory and metaphor portrayed in both modern and medieval art, and the historical and cultural context of such a piece.

For our November meeting we will be looking at Tom Stoppard's play *the Hard Problem*, which several members have already started to read, and found it full of philosophical concepts and questions right from the start.

**Our next meeting is 15 October when we are having one of our now regular Members' Choices from our stock of back issues of *Philosophy Now* magazines.**

#### POETRY TOO

Ruth Dutton & Rosie Harvey

We were pleased to welcome Bob and Betty back to the poetry group, as we celebrated **The Seasons** with the usual huge variety of contributions. Bob read one of our favourites *The Road not Taken* by Robert Frost, and Betty gave us Edward Thomas' *Adlestrop* and *Home Thoughts from Abroad* by Robert Browning. Spring featured frequently with poems by e.e.cummings, John Clare, Emily Dickinson, Christina Rossetti and William Blake. A E Housman delighted as always, with *Loveliest of Trees*. Someone we had not read before was American poet Sarah Teasdale, who wrote nostalgically about *A Winter Blue Jay*. Brian Bilston surprised many of us with a wonderfully tongue in cheek piece with *Advent Calendar*. John Keats linked the natural life cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth to the four seasons, in *Human Seasons*. George Ellis summarised a whole year's weather in four lines from snow, to shower, crops and a freeze in *Twelve Months*. **Our next meeting is on Friday October 25<sup>th</sup>, the theme is Holidays !**

#### READING GROUP 2

Linda Jennings

The book chosen for the August meeting was **The Only Story** by Booker Prize winning author **Julian Barnes**, which, set in the 1960s, tells the story of 19-year-old Paul, on vacation from university, and Christine, a 48 year old married woman. They meet at their local tennis club, and embark on a passionate love affair, which does not end well. The story is narrated by Paul, in a structure using initially the first person, then second person, and finally the third person. Members expressed a range of views - not all enjoying this novel and agreed that the second half 'dragged itself along'. An independent critic commented: 'Reading the second part of the book is like watching a car crash in slow motion'. **There is no set book for our September meeting**, when members plan to recommend to each other some of their own personal reads.

## YOGA GROUP

From September, the yoga group now has 2 sessions - 10am and 11.15am, both weekly on a Monday morning at the Catholic Parish Hall. There is space for a few new members if anyone would like to join in.

Karyl Rees



## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP: Competition Results September 2024 Roger Harris

As the days shorten and the weather becomes unreliable, one might expect that the range of available images would diminish. Not so for our group. We have had steady flow of local interest and holiday adventures that will see us well into October. It was not possible to be unimpressed by John Ruffell's short series of what we might expect in the next few weeks. Glorious examples of autumn colour which I hope will inspire all of you to get out there with your cameras. John takes first place in the September competition and is followed closely by Jan Robertson for the comprehensive series from Dumfries and Galloway. Jan is just a hair's breadth in front of Karyl Rees for who supplied plenty of great images from Packwood House and the town of Evesham. Thanks everyone for these little gems that brighten the day.



## WALKING GROUPS

### AMBLERS GROUP

The amble in September was cancelled as it coincided with the u3a holiday in Cardiff. Details of the amble on 11<sup>th</sup> October will be sent out in due course.

Bronwen Bunting

### FRIDAY WALKERS

There was no walk in September so we will next meet on Friday October 18th.

Jane and Chris Baker



### SCRABBLE GROUP

Come and have fun and meet new friends at our Scrabble Group which takes place **first Friday each month from 2pm. Contact Group Leader, Linda Salsbury for location of where we meet 07872 625006 email: [lindasalsbury@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindasalsbury@hotmail.co.uk)**

Linda Salsbury

### National Trust Visits

Since March when we started this Group within Alcester U3A we have visited a different property each month. So far Hanbury Hall, Charlecote, Croome, Snowhill, Hidcote, Coughton Court and Upton. A small group of regulars meet in the properties carpark before heading, in the main, straight to the café for coffee. We then wander off to do our own thing, looking at the gardens or going round the house. Many meet in the café again for lunch and depart in their own time after a very pleasant day. There are still more properties around Alcester that we have not yet visited and we can always repeat destinations in a different season.

David and Linda Bradley



If you fancy joining us we will be at the meeting on Tuesday. **Our trips out are on the third Wednesday of the month.**

**ALCESTER u3a INTEREST GROUPS: Contact Group Coordinator for further information**

Group	Meeting	Time	Venue	Organiser
Art	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday Starting Sept 2024	10.00 am – 12.30 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Kay Parish
Bowls	Fortnightly from 24 June	10.00 am	Bidford Bowls Club	David Sanders
Beginners Family History	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	2.00 pm	Contact group organiser for details	Linda Cooper
Church Visits	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday as advised	11.00 am	Various	Chris Baker
Crafts	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday Sept to March	10.00-12.00	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Lynda Lamb
Cycling	Various dates and venues		Tracey Wyatt	
French	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	2.30 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Shirley Stout
Garden Lovers 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thursday April – Oct	2.30 pm	Various	Janet Allely
History	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday	10.45 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Lynda Matheson
Italian Conversation	Fortnightly on Wednesday	2 – 4.00 pm	The Huff Cap, Great Alne	Chris Brain
Jazz & Big Band Appreciation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Bob Applegarth
Mah Jong	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	2.00 pm	Various	Bronwen Bunting
Man Talk	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	2–4.00 pm	Huff Cap, Great Alne	Ian Gregory
Music Appreciation	Last Wednesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Jan Rowe
The Elastic Band	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	10.00 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	John Pickering
Piano, Keyboard & Theory Tuition	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10.00-4.00 pm	Confirm with group leader	Chris Capstick
National Trust Visits	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday		Various	David/Linda Bradley
Philosophy	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Peter Tugwell
Photo Group	On-line Group		Roger Harris	
Poetry Too	Last Friday	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Ruth Dutton Rosemary Harvey
Ambles	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday	10.30 am	Various	Bronwen Bunting
Walks	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	10.00 am	Various	Jane & Chris Baker
Reading 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Linda Jennings
Rees Reading	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	10.30 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Karyl Rees
Scrabble	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday	2.00 pm	Contact group organiser for details	Linda Salsbury
Singing for Pleasure	Last Thursday	10.30-12 noon	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Chris Capstick
Spanish	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	10.00 am	Malt Mill Lane Community Centre	John Douglas
Theatre & Outings	As notified			Joe White
Yoga on Monday	Every Monday 2 groups	10-11.00 am 11.15-12.15	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Karyl Rees