

SEPTEMBER

Monthly meetings are held at the
at 2.30 pm on the 1st

Greig Hall, Alcester
Tuesday of the month



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

During a recent meeting involving the committee and the group leaders the subject of communication with members of the groups was raised. In particular, there was concern in some cases that group leaders do not always know how many members are planning to attend the next group meeting. We recognise that in some cases this is not particularly important whilst in others it is crucial in order to properly prepare. However we have asked group leaders where applicable to re-iterate their communication requirements with members. Could members please take note of group leaders' requests where appropriate.

RSC COSTUME TOURS

Val Hamblin

Thursday 2nd October and Friday 3rd October

Start time: 1.45 pm ready for a 2.00pm tour. Meeting Place: outside the theatre

A reminder to members going on the costume tours that they must be OUTSIDE the RSC by 1.45pm where they will be met by the guide.

THE ELASTIC'S TOO STRETCHED!

John Pickering



If there are any members out there who enjoy good company and the chance to "sing their hearts out", please come along and join the overstretched singers in the Elastic Band! Of course new musicians, of any standard, are always welcome too! Our next meeting at 9.45 for 10.00 am start, is the second Wednesday in September (10th) and is held in the small room to the right of the front doors at Greig Hall. Why not come along and give it a go?

SYMPHONY HALL TRIP 3 DECEMBER 2025

Karen Dowman

A gentle reminder to all those who haven't paid for the above trip that the cut-off date for payment is 2 September. As Symphony Hall requires payment at the beginning of October, I will assume that anyone who has not paid by that date no longer wishes to attend and will approach those on waiting list.



Programme for 2025

2 September	Jenny Stone	Comic Monologues
7 October	Kay Starkey	The Work of the Air Ambulance (cash collection)
4 November	Graham Short	Life of a Micro Artist
2 December	Coughton Community Choir	Seasonal Musical Entertainment

Chairman	David West	chair.u3aalcester@gmail.com
Joint Vice-Chair	Lyn Pickering	
Joint Vice-Chair	Karen Dowman	
Treasurer	Jean Morgan	treasurer.u3aalcester@gmail.com
Assistant Treasurer	Linda Randell	
Secretary/Minutes Sec	Miranda Sanders	mjanesanders56@gmail.com
Membership Secretary	Lyn Pickering	membership.u3aalcester@gmail.com
Groups Coordinator	Vacancy	
Speaker Team Co-ordinator	Linda Randell	
Committee Members	Val Hamblin	Karyl Rees Sue Robertson
Coopted Members	Christine Dyer	Clive Owen
Newsletter	Bronwen Bunting	
Web: Manager - Lindsay Evans	http://alcester.u3aasite.uk	Annual Sub: £20.00 Only members can join groups



THEATRE TRIPS

Joe White (joe_patwhite@msn.com)

The trips planned for November and February are both fully booked and there is a reserve list for each of them. We are introducing a new trip in January (details below)

Saturday 8 November 2025 "Midsomer Murders: The Killings at Badgers Drift" at Malvern Theatre £38 each Ref T15)

The coach will leave the Greig Hall at 11.00 am

Fully booked. The Booking & Reserve lists will be at the August meeting.

SATURDAY 28 February 2026 "Inspector Morse: House of Ghosts" at Malvern Theatre

£40 per ticket (Ref T17)

The coach will leave the Greig Hall at 11.00 am; **Best stalls seats in rows D, E, F & G**

J Fully booked. The Booking & Reserve lists will be at the August meeting.

Payment for this one is required by Tuesday 2 December

New Show Saturday 17 January 2027 Sherlock Holmes "The Hunt for Moriarty" at Malvern Theatre £34 (Ref T18)

The coach will leave the Greig Hall at 11.00 am **Best stalls seats in rows D, E & F**

Payment by Bank transfer to:- "The Alcester U3A" Sort Code 08 92 99 A/C No. 67268429 Ref XXX/T18

Or pay the Treasurer with Cash or a cheque. The Booking & Reserve lists will be at the August meeting.

Payment for this one is required by Tuesday 4 November

When you pay for a Theatre Trip by BACS Please include your membership No and T No

* * * INTEREST GROUP NEWS * * *



ART APPRECIATION

Val Trim

The life and work of the artist **Cezanne** was thoroughly and brilliantly explored by Lynda Matheson's lively presentation at this month's meeting! The influence of other artists upon his own style was illustrated as he developed as a painter and thinker about art. His pioneering work across four decades impacted the approach that other contemporary artists and succeeding generations took to their own work. As a practitioner and 'influencer', Lynda demonstrated the towering role Cezanne had in the creation of the beginnings of modernity in the field of painting and beyond. **Next month sees a consideration of Weird Art!** What does it mean and how can we understand it? The influence of Marcel Duchamp on art will be introduced -- He has a lot to answer for!! Come and find out for yourself! **Sept 4th 10.30am RC Hall on Priory Road.**

CARD MAKING

Lynda Lamb

Now on a summer break, resuming in September- 2nd Friday of the month when I look forward to seeing everyone.

CHURCH VISITS

Chris & Jane Baker

We enjoyed two amazing visits in August. At **St Laurence, Meriden**, we enjoyed a warm welcome from the Rev'd Kevin Flanagan to a church originally built on the site by Lady Godiva and rebuilt by Norman, medieval and more recent generations. The "Lepers Squint" window allowed lepers to view the altar and participate in communion from outside the church, where there is also a preaching cross which predates the church. At the east end of each of the two aisles lie tombs of 14th century knights. The church has a spectacular collection of stained glass including the poignant memorial to Captain Edward Banks, pictured with his back to us, kneeling before an altar. He died in WW1 and is buried at Ypres. The artist was the celebrated Florence Camm of Birmingham.

A short distance away is **St John Baptist at Berkswell**, lauded by Pevsner and by Simon Jenkins for its "most interesting" Norman features and "a pure and unspoilt chancel". The half-timbered porch (with a room above) once housed the village school. Much of the interior is Norman, whilst beneath the church is the famous (and rare for a parish church) crypt. Its octagonal western extension is unique. Around the edge is a stone bench for children and the infirm - giving rise to the expression "the weakest go to the wall". We admired but, sadly, could not listen to their prized 1897 "Father" Willis organ. After a largely successful hunt for the 9 carved mice hidden on the early 20th century woodwork, the

signature of their carver Robert Thompson, we rewarded ourselves with lunch at the Bear, a hostelry only slightly younger than our churches!

CRAFT GROUP

Lynda Lamb

We are now on our Summer break & will meet again on the 3rd Wednesday in September.

Elastic Band news

John Pickering

The next meeting of the band will be held on 10th September.

GARDEN LOVERS GROUP

Janet Allely

Rain held off for Garden Lovers walking round the various gardens at **Spetchley** but the lawns and horse pool filled with water lilies looked in need and the swans and ducks were resting on the bank. The watering system resulted in good vegetables and much work was being done by gardeners. I was too late to see the photographic exhibits but I hope others enjoyed the show. **Our next visit is to Studley Manor House on 11th September** and I will email details later but will not be at the September monthly meeting.

HISTORY

Lynda Matheson

Our annual **Object Lesson** meeting was a box of treats this month. The members contributed objects which had stories as diverse as pigeon racing and Pompeii. Val Trim started the meeting by examining the statistics around the deaths of 2.5million homing pigeons a year. Paul Brenda talked about the wartime atrocities which were the origins of modern-day anti-German feeling in Tripoli, Sicily; while on the Italian mainland, Val Hamblin used pumice stone from Vesuvius to illustrate the story of the 79AD eruption and the discovery of the ruins of Pompeii. Joan Ogg's miniature cotton bobbins prompted a discussion of the differing roles of men and women in trades involving sewing. Margaret Noyce brought us close to home with a succinct history of Shakespeare's birthplace; while Patrick Hanglin and Lynda Matheson both produced objects from Indonesia, Patrick's a *kris* from Bali and Lynda a rod puppet from Java which 17th century Islamic missionaries used to spread their faith across the Indonesia islands. Unfortunately, John Douglas was unable to make his contribution, we wish him a speedy recovery. **In September Karyl Rees will talk about Alcester's National School**

JAZZ & BIG BAND SOUND

Bob Applegarth.

Geoff Male entertained us with a selection of the bands that accompanied Frank Sinatra on his many recordings. Frank seemed to favour big bands and he recorded with Count Basie, Billy May, Nelson Riddle among others. Frank's vocals went down well of course. Thanks Geoff. **At our September meeting, Stuart from Worcester U3a is giving us a talk on big band arrangers.** Hope to see you all then.

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Jan Rowe

As Jan Rowe our leader had another appointment Bob Applegarth ran this meeting. Val Trim presented a programme entitled **Europeans at the Movies** featuring film excerpts and music associated with the clip she showed on screen. The composers represented were Erich Korngold (The Sea Hawk), Edmund Meisel (Battleship Potemkin), Max Steiner (Gone with the Wind), Bernard Herrman (Psycho), Paul Dukas (Fantasia), Eric Morricone (The Mission), Johann Strauss II (The Blue Danube as used in 2001 A Space Odyssey), Francis Lai (Love Story), Franz Liszt (Hungarian Rhapsody No.2 to Tom and Jerry Cartoon) finished the programme in a very light hearted manner. **Report by John Ruffell**

PHILOSOPHY

Peter Tugwell

Our August meeting looked at philosophical topics raised in talks, discussions, presentations and lectures found on the internet and introduced to the group by members. In the time available we covered four areas, starting appropriately with an introduction to philosophy. 'Appropriate' because it covered the ideas, concepts, methodology and vocabulary that a would-be first year undergraduate would be faced with on starting her academic career this autumn. Our next topic picked up on one area mentioned in that lecture, the arguments for the existence of God where an atheist became a deist on his reflective re-engagement with philosophical inquiry. We then progressed to the question of determinism versus free will, with its ramifications for moral responsibility [spoiler alert: a future session will look at 'compatibilism'], and finally the importance of language as to how it shapes the way we think. Looking ahead, in November we will be looking at a play by Sophocles, 'Antigone' and its moral implications. For our next session we have several member's internet talks we didn't reach and so we will be looking at those: the philosophers J. S. Mill and Ludwig Wittgenstein (he of the 'A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes'), and from political philosophy the theories encompassed by 'Utilitarianism'. **Our next meeting is on 23 September 2025.**

POETRY TOO

Ruth Dutton & Rosemary Harvey

The group took a summer break in August; **the next theme is Flying on Friday September 26th.**

READING GROUP 2

Linda Jennings

This month's book was **The Heart's Invisible Furies by John Boyne**. Ten episodes from his life tell the story of gay man Cyril Avery, born in Ireland in 1945, and of his struggles with his sexuality and social attitudes. At times it is laugh out loud funny, at others heart-rendingly sad. For the group this was a Marmite book - those who liked it (only 2) were enthusiastic in their praise, those who didn't (6) were equally enthusiastic in their damning of it and only a single one was somewhere in between. Everyone agreed it was beautifully written but... most felt it was too long and too explicit, characters were unbelievable and too many issues were covered.

In September we will be talking about The Tidal Zone by Sarah Moss.

(Report by Jan Robertson)

Theatre Visits

Joe White

The latest visit on 9 August was to a new venue, the ornate Victorian Everyman theatre in Cheltenham, to see

Wilco: Love and Death of Rock 'roll'.

The play with live music, was a mixture of words and rock 'roll'. It told the story of the life of John Wilkinson, a university educated lad from Canvey Island, Essex. Changing his name to Wilco Johnson, along with friends, he formed the rock n roll group, Dr Feelgood. The band enjoyed some success back in the 70's.

Known as the Canvey Island legend, he was informed in 2012 that he had inoperable cancer with a year to live. Refusing all treatment, he decided to spend his last months seeing the places and people who had meant a lot to him during his life. A second opinion some months later, determined the cancer, with a substantial degree of risk, was operable. Wanting to enjoy life again, he underwent the surgery successfully and reformed the band, Dr Feelgood! The play ended with the reformed group, along with two surprise singers, providing more rock n roll, along with audience participation.

Discussion afterwards amongst the group, suggested this was a play that very much divided opinion. A bit like Marmite! Some liked the music/songs (evoking memories of dances attended) to those that found the music too loud, the language used on occasions, inappropriate. Regardless - As always, we are indebted to Joe for arranging the visit and to Dave, the driver.

(Report by Julie Godfrey)



WALKING GROUPS

Bronwen Bunting, Jane & Chris Baker



AMBLERS GROUP

Bronwen Bunting

The August amble from **Great Alne around Alne Hills** was led by Angela Bradley and enjoyed in beautiful weather by 10 members. The couple of stiles were a challenge for one or two but all managed to get over safely. The walk was followed by lunch at Great Alne Park.

FRIDAY WALKERS

As the group leaders were away this month, Alyson O'Nions led a four mile walk around the lovely village of **Welford** on Avon, starting at the Bell pub at 10.30 was glorious but not too hot. It is an easy, flat and very pretty walk involving thatched cottages, some open fields, hidden paths, a farm shop and a church, the latter two being in Weston upon Avon which is a gentle ten-minute stroll across the fields from Welford. The group then returned along the River Avon to Welford where Alyson incorporated two side loops showing several examples of animal figures atop thatched roofs. There was a drinks stop halfway round at the circular benches by the village maypole. The group arrived back at the Bell for a well-earned drink in the lovely pub gardens. **The next walk on September 19th will be led by David Georgeson from the Kings Head in Aston Cantlow.** More details will follow shortly.

Jane and Chris Baker



Jane and Chris Baker Email: jane.pentlands@gmail.com



SCRABBLE GROUP

The Scrabble group is taking a summer break during July and August and will not be meeting in September as many of the members will be away in Devon enjoying the u3a holiday, so the next get together will be on the first Friday in October. If you would like to come and have fun and meet new friends at our Scrabble Group, it 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

Linda Salsbury

YOGA

Weekly Yoga classes will recommence on Mondays 8 September after the summer break. Classes are held in the Catholic Parish Hall from 10.00 – 11.00 am.

Karyl Rees



ALCESTER u3a INTEREST GROUPS: Contact Group Coordinator for further information

Group	Meeting	Time	Venue	Organiser
Art Appreciation	First Thursday	10.30 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Val Trim
Bowls	Fortnightly from 3 rd June	10.00 am - 12	Bidford Bowls Club	David Sanders
Bridge Improvers	Weekly on Tuesday (except 1 st Tuesday)	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Paul Brenda
Family History	3 rd Monday	2.00 pm	Alcester Library	Linda Cooper
Church Visits	4 th Tuesday as advised	11.00 am	Various	Chris Baker
Card Making	2 nd Friday Sep-May	10.00 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Lynda Lamb
Crafts	3 rd Wednesday Sept to March	10.00-12.00	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Lynda Lamb
German Conversation	2 nd Monday	2 – 4.00 pm	The Railway Inn, Station Rd Studley B80 7JS	Graham Stout
French	3 rd Tuesday	2.30 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Shirley Stout
Garden Lovers	2 nd Thursday April – Oct	2.30 pm	Various	Janet Allely
History	3 rd Thursday	10.30am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Lynda Matheson
Jazz & Big Band Appreciation	2 nd Wednesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Bob Applegarth
Mah Jong	4 th Thursday	2.00 pm	Various	Bronwen Bunting
Man Talk	3 rd Tuesday	2–4.00 pm	The Huff Cap, Great Alne	Ian Gregory
Music Appreciation	Last Wednesday	2.00 pm	Malt Mill Community Centre	Jan Rowe
The Elastic Band	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday	10.00 am	Lounge at the Greig Hall	John Pickering
Piano, Keyboard & Theory Tuition	1 st Wednesday 3 rd Wednesday	10.00-4.00 pm	Confirm with group leader	Chris Capstick
National Trust Visits	3 rd Wednesday		Various	Linda Bradley
Philosophy	4 th Tuesday	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Peter Tugwell
Poetry Too	Last Friday	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Ruth Dutton
Ambles	2 nd Friday	10.30 am	Various	Bronwen Bunting
Walks	3 rd Friday	10.00 am	Various	Jane & Chris Baker
Reading 2	2 nd Tuesday	2.00 pm	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Linda Jennings
Rees Reading	2 nd Monday	10.30 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Karyl Rees
Scrabble	1 st 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 nd & 4 th Tuesday	10.00 am	Malt Mill Lane Community Centre	John Douglas
Theatre Visits	As notified			Joe White
Trips	As notified			Linda Randell
Yoga on Monday	Every Monday	10-11.00 am	Catholic Church Meeting Room	Karyl Rees