



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

mkhdu3a.org.uk



NEWSLETTER

No. 72 June 2019

Dear Member

First of all, many thanks to Mike Clark for his dedicated work in preparing seventy-one newsletters. Mike is remaining on the U3A Committee, and helping me in the process of taking over the monthly newsletter.

By way of introduction, I am Ken Fisher, Business and Communications Secretary for our local U3A. My aim is to continue producing an interesting and informative newsletter for all our members.

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Our May Meeting and AGM



SCIENCE ROCKS

Some thoughts from our co-chair, Anne Crerar

Our monthly meeting in May was the Annual General Meeting and we opened with some brief notices and thanks to the members of the Executive Committee who were leaving, as well as those who were staying, and some new members. You will find some more information and photographs at the end of this newsletter.

We were then very fortunate to have Lucy Hawking as our speaker.

Lucy is a children's novelist and a science educator. If that sounded a bit daunting there was no need for us to worry - Lucy's talk was interesting, amusing, engaging, informative and understandable. (Did you know that there are a finite number of molecules of water on our planet and so we can be pretty sure that when we drink a glass of water some of it has already passed through a dinosaur?)

Lucy also shared some warm stories about her father Stephen, the famous physicist, with whom she wrote some of her children's books.

Waterstones bookshop brought along some copies of two of the George books (George's Secret Key to the Universe and George and the Big Bang) and a long queue of grandparents saw to it that the books were soon sold out. And Lucy signed them all despite having her (other) arm in plaster.

It was a good afternoon and everyone enjoyed it!

Anne Crerar (Co-Chair)

Some photographs from the meeting



Diane Worland, outgoing Business Secretary, after receiving thanks from Nick Wright (outgoing Chair).



Julie Allder giving Social Secretary report



Mike Clark thanking everyone



Tessa Bidgood giving the Treasurers report



Nick Wright introducing Lucy Hawking



Lucy Hawking giving her talk

June Monthly Meeting

Skulduggery at Soho

In 1826 the head of the accounts department at the Soho Foundry in Smethwick was caught with his fingers in the till. Thanks to James Watt's invention of a letter-copying machine, this remarkable story is preserved in Birmingham's Boulton & Watt archives, and in this talk we hear the voices of all the people involved in their own words, as thievery is uncovered, retribution takes its course, and the innocent suffer alongside the guilty.



Mary Bodfish

Location: Smethwick, West Midlands

About me...

The world of the past has fascinated me from my earliest memories and exploring it continues to delight me in retirement. My working life was spent firstly in bookselling and then in university administration, but days off frequently found me rummaging happily in record offices and libraries. "How come I was landed with the name of Bodfish?" is a question I began working on over 40 years ago. Wanting to know "What went on in the past around where I live?" made me a founder member in 1984 of Smethwick Local History Society, of which I am currently chairman. I have taught local history research and palaeography for the University of Birmingham's School of Continuing Studies. Sharing my discoveries via my talks has been a delight to me for over 20 years.

The meeting will begin in the All Saints Centre, at the junction of the High Street and Vicarage Road in Kings Heath, at 2.00 pm on Tuesday June 11th.

Social Programme

Social Activities from June 2019

This is a summary of events in the coming month/s which are already planned. New arrangements are made frequently and if you want to be kept updated on any activities please contact the co-ordinator, (see the foot of this entry) or check the monthly newsletters.

Drop In Coffee Morning at Kings Heath Park, Victorian Tea Rooms

Open to all our members to enable new and existing members to meet more informally.

Drop in for a coffee or tea and a chat on Friday June 14th between 10.30 and 12.00. On arrival pay £2.50 at the café's counter and you can then drink unlimited tea or coffee which will be available for U3A members in the Conservatory. You can also purchase a lovely piece of cake in the café to go with your drink. The Conservatory will be reserved just for our U3A members. Parking available and it is fully accessible. Any questions please contact:

Tessa on tessabidgood@btinternet.com
or Val on envybaxter@hotmail.com

If you are aware of any member who does not have access to the internet and may be interested in the coffee morning please let them know.

There will also be a coffee morning on July 12th.

Lunches

A booking has been made for Byzantium in York Road, Kings Heath for lunch on Friday 21 June and for an early evening meal on Monday 24 June. Food will from the party menu, which is £19.95 for a range of tapas; drinks and service are additional charges.

If you want to join us for either of these meals or want to be kept informed of future meals please contact Carey.

Concerts

Reservations have been made for a CBSO matinee concert on Wednesday 30th October at the Symphony Hall when the programme will be:-

Bizet Carmen: Suite No. 2, 20'
Chausson Poème for Violin and Orchestra, 16'
Ravel Tzigane, 9'
Dvořák Symphony No. 7, 38'

The exact price of the tickets is to be confirmed but it is expected that they will be £31.00 per person.

The reservation is held with the Box Office until late August so places will need to be reserved with Carey and ticket paid for by Sunday 11th August: you will of course know the exact price before you have to commit to buying the ticket.

Also tickets will be purchased for a concert at the Conservatoire, near by Millenium Point, for a female singing group, Papagena, with the Orchestra of the Swan on Wednesday 11 December at 2.30 pm. Tickets for this will be £20.00, and payment is required in advance.

Papagena recently performed at St. Mary's in Moseley: they then sang acapella, with a range of classical and folk songs.

If you want tickets for either of these concerts or want to be informed of further bookings please contact Carey.

Carey cannot guarantee step free access to seats for the concerts, but if anyone needs step free access please let Carey know and she will try to arrange it.

Theatre

Theatre Tickets for the following performance have been booked and paid for: 18/7/19 Measure for Measure, 13.15 performance at the RSC Stratford

We usually meet in the theatre foyer close to the Box Office half an hour before the start of a performance and tickets are left at the Box Office for those arriving late.

We are currently looking at productions being performed in Birmingham theatres and will notify theatre group members of proposed trips.

If you would like to join the theatre group or would like to know more, please contact Julie. Joining the theatre group puts you under no obligation to join any or all theatre trips but ensures you are notified of forthcoming trips.

Cinema

Roy Stove has taken over the running of the cinema group and is looking at possible screenings. Due to time constraints if you want to be kept updated of arrangements for future cinema trips, please contact Roy who will add your name to the cinema group and he will notify you directly of planned film trips. Joining the cinema group puts you under no obligation to join any or all cinema trips but ensures you are notified of forthcoming trips.

Coach Trips

Rita Menezes and Ruth Livermore have volunteered to help organise a trip. We are, however, still seeking one or more volunteers to work with Rita and Ruth in organising a trip or trips. If you would like to be involved in organising coach trips please contact Julie.

Contact Details -

Carey:	careybaff@live.co.uk	or 0121 472 6535
Julie:	julieallder@yahoo.co.uk	or 07506720756
Tessa:	tessabidgood@btinternet.com	
Roy:	jroystove@googlemail.com	
Val:	envybaxter@hotmail.com	

University of Birmingham Events and an Appeal

Lapworth Museum

Monday 3rd of June and 5th August 12.00 to 13.00

Dumbfounded by dinosaurs, confused about clastics, puzzled by pyrite? Why not join this tour of the Museum and get the chance to see behind the scenes!

All tours are free of charge and are run on a first come first served basis - please meet at reception.

Contact Anna at: a.b.chrystal@bham.ac.uk

Tours fill up quickly and members are advised to book early.

Summer Festival Opera: A Little Night Music

Barber Concert Hall, Barber Institute of Fine Arts 14/15/16 June @7.00pm

tickets from reception 0121 414 7333 £15/£12

Fall in love this June with some magical summer night music. Flirt with romantic possibilities and become entangled in the complex web of affairs of actress Desirée Armfeldt and the men who love her. Winner of four Tony Awards and inspired by Ingmar Bergman's film Smiles of a Summer Night, A Little Night Music features a ravishing musical score by the incomparable Stephen Sondheim including the classic song Send in the Clowns.

An Appeal for Help

We have received the request below from Dan Cottle, a researcher at the University of Birmingham. Are you able to help?

I am an academic at the University of Birmingham in the field of physics education. I am starting a study with the aim of improving the retention in the teaching profession of early career physics teachers. You may be aware of media reports explaining the shortages of physics teachers and also the problems new teachers face.

I am trying to find and recruit some retired teachers of physics who might be interested in being paired up with a new teacher in the role of an informal mentor. I would be very happy to chat to you about it in more detail if you might be interested?

Contact email. d.cottle@bham.ac.uk

Picture Postcards for Charity Appeal

Our member Elisabeth Leicester is collecting picture postcards (new & used) to help with fund-raising for Mission Aviation Fellowship (M.A.F.), which is a Christian organisation working in remote areas in some 26 developing countries. It uses about 135 light aircraft to transport relief and medical workers, food, educational supplies etc. etc. and to effect medical evacuation. If you have postcards to donate please bring them along to either the June or July Meetings, when you will find a box for them on the Enquiries table.

Interest Group of the Month Jazz Appreciation

Our third group of the month is *Jazz Appreciation* and the following item has been submitted by group leader Carol Miller:

The first Jazz Appreciation group began at the start of the Moseley and Kings Heath U3A and, not long afterwards, as the first group became full, a second group was formed. We meet in each others houses so this limits the numbers, but, although some members have come and gone, we have found that 'small is beautiful' as we get to know each other and discussion is easy. Initially, when we are learning about each other, we introduced ourselves through the jazz we enjoyed, playing and talking about our favourite music. Definitions of jazz are not tightly agreed and the range is enormous. Sometimes our meetings have taken a theme, for example, an artist or an instrument, with one member introducing the theme and leading the discussion. For some months we followed a Jazz timeline, prepared for us by Ted Raybould (the only musician in the group), listening to the earliest recordings of jazz from the 1920s and linking this with world events. We followed developments up to the late 1950's and then paused for a while as that era became so vast and complex with the beginnings of Bepop and so may interesting individuals to listen to - Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Mary Lou Williams, Thelonius Monk among the many.

Recently, an exciting development has been our links with the Jazz research group at Birmingham City University. This is actually the largest group of researchers in jazz in the world! That, linked with the Jazz studies degree for musicians at BCU, makes us privileged indeed. Birmingham is a very important jazz hub. Introduced to us by Tony Dudley Evans, nationally a very well respected jazz curator, members of the Jazz research group have come to talk to us about their interests. These include explorations of jazz at the BBC in the 60's, Duke Ellington at the BBC and we are looking forward to the coming months when more talks are planned. For these meetings, the two Jazz Appreciation groups join together. A great plus of the groups is that we often go to gigs together. There are so many in Birmingham with so many talented players. If someone spots something they are interested in, an email goes round, and an outing is arranged.

The Jazz Appreciation groups have really opened up opportunities for us and have given us all a very interesting group of new friends.

It is difficult to show jazz appreciation in a photograph but, be assured, this photo shows members of the group watching the film 'Jazz on a Summers Day' on TV at the house of one of our members.



Forthcoming Members' Meetings

Date	Time	Venue	Topic	Speaker
Tuesday June 11	2.00	All Saints Centre	Skulduggery at Soho	Mary Bodfish
Tuesday July 9	2.00	All Saints Centre	A Virtual Tour of the Outer Circle (no.11 bus!)	David Humphries
Tuesday August 13	2.00	All Saints Church	Local history A story to tell	Andy Bishop
Tuesday September 10	2.00	All Saints Centre	'How to go Green'	Harriet Martin
Tuesday October 15th	2.00	All Saints Centre	Birmingham in Action: Working with Birmingham University	Tbc
December 2019	2.00	All Saints Centre	Christmas festivities	
January 2020	2.00	All Saints Centre	Victorian and Edwardian Building in Birmingham	Tim Bridges

If members have any suggestions for future speakers, please contact Sylvia Butler at a monthly meeting.

National Summer Schools

One of this year's National Summer Schools is being held at Aston University from Monday 12th to Thursday 15th of August. Use this link for more details of the wide variety of courses available to U3A members.

<https://summer-schools.u3a.org.uk/>

Contact information

Interest Group enquiries - please contact one of the Interest Group Coordinators:

- Roy Stove 0121 459 8604 jroystove@googlemail.com
- Brenda Bingham 0121 444 6295 brbingham@hotmail.com

Membership enquiries - please contact:

- Jackie Spearpoint 0121 439 5824 membership@mkhdu3a.org.uk

Social events enquiries - please contact:

- Julie Alder 0750 672 0756 juliealder@yahoo.co.uk

General enquires - please contact:

- Sara Meyer 0121 218 3759
- Anne Crerar 0788 170 2305
- Mike Clark 0121 689 2765
- Or email enquiries@mkhdu3a.org.uk

Your Committee:

- Co-chair Anne Crerar
- Co-chair Sara Meyer
- Business & Communications Secretary Ken Fisher
- Treasurer Tessa Bidgood
- Social Secretary Julie Alder
- Interest Group Co-ordinators Brenda Bingham and Roy Stove
- Membership Secretary. Jackie Spearpoint
- Monthly Meeting Co-ordinator. Sylvia Butler
- Advisory Member Mike Clark

Photographs of your new committee



Ken Fisher



Tessa Bidgood



Sara Meyer



Brenda Bingham



Julie Allder



Mike Clark



Roy Stove



Anne Crerar



Sylvia Butler



Jackie Spearpoint