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Fetcham U3A

Fetcham & District U3A Newsletter

[This is a reconstruction of this Newsletter in content but not style or layout, for reference purposes only]

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Notes From The Editors

Our Chairman, Ian, has decided to stand down as editor of your favourite newspaper. Although the likes of Piers Morgan & Janet Street Porter applied for the position, your Committee felt that Piers was too busy irritating Platell on TV and Janet S. P. was too occupied with her Australian adventures to spare the requisite amount of time.

After searching high and low for a suitably qualified Editor they settled on that talented couple Peter & Patricia as joint editors.

Fortunately for the couple a lot of investigative work had been done at the Central Surrey meeting hosted by Fetcham U3A which led them to believe that the Newsletter should be produced as four side of A3 which when folded gives an eight page Newsletter of A4 proportions.

The purpose of this Newsletter is to keep members informed of Group activities and the courses available to members. Also to make everyone aware of the social arrangements being made by the Committee for our future entertainment.

We would welcome any contributions from our members. Particularly details of any holiday or outings that people have enjoyed in recent years.

Do we have a crossword enthusiast who would like to create a crossword just for the Newsletter? And, we would welcome a 'letters to the editor' section if you would care to express your points of view.

Please address Comments to The Editors.



Patricia & Peter our Editors

Record Attendance At AGM

So who said "No one attends an AGM". Committee members of Fetcham U3A were startled when some 142 souls attended the AGM held on the 25th November in St Mary's Hall.

The Chairman gave a very upbeat review of the year and expressed his sorrow that two of the original Founders of the branch had decided to resign from the Committee, to allow them to spend more time with their Grandchildren. He felt that the good piece of news was that they had willingly agreed to take over the editorship of the Newsletter!

Peter speaking as Treasurer for the last time, gave a short history of the very satisfactory expansion of the Branch to its present membership of 250 in only two years.

After the business of the meeting was completed our Chairman gave a delightful, fascinating and superbly illustrated account of the trip he and his wife Gill made to New Zealand in the Autumn of 2003.

One of the highlights was his very expert use of the projection and sound equipment bought with our grants.

Chairman's Letter

During the last year the activities of the U3A have expanded and built on the sound start provided by the founding committee under Neville. We became registered as a charity in May 2003 and in this year's accounts you will see our first Gift Aid claim. At last year's AGM Neville stood down and I took over. Winnie & Margaret were elected to the Committee, having previously served as co-opted members and Garth was also elected. Since then Yvonne has taken on the role of looking after the welfare of members and has been co-opted to the committee.

Jo supports Yvonne in her welfare role and also helps by welcoming new members. Jo organised our first new Members Meeting in the Fetcham Reading Room in early November. It was attended by fifty members and was a great success. We were encouraging members to get to know each other and to join whichever of the interest groups appealed to them. Suddenly a third Wine Appreciation group looked very likely and the prospective new Gentle Movement Group gained several extra members. We also had some offers of help in running groups and ideas for new groups. Welcome to all new members and I trust you will make new friends and enjoy the interest groups you join.

The monthly meetings with speakers are arranged for ten months of the year, with gaps in August and December.

We have been entertained by some very good speakers and attendance reached 114 members for the recent talks on the magistracy. In September Roger, one of our members, gave a memorable talk on a recent holiday he and Gail had enjoyed in Afghanistan. At the meetings we make use of the sound system purchased in part with the aid of a grant from Mole Valley District Council and of a laptop and data projector purchased with a grant from Awards for All from Lottery funds. We are very grateful for both grants and have sent letters of appreciation to our Awarders.

The core strength of the U3A is in its interest Groups which provide so many different avenues for study and friendly debate. This year many new Groups have been founded and the more established ones have gone from strength to strength. My thanks go to all group leaders on

your behalf for all the hard work they put in. In particular this year I should like to thank Mike for the efforts he has put in at the Howard of Effingham School in running three computer classes for beginners, intermediates and digital image devotees. We have been using class rooms with thirty state-of-the-art PCs and the support of Howard staff. The school is a science college, the first in Surrey, and as part of the award of the title has developed links with partner junior schools and organisations in the Community. Three of us were able to attend the official opening by Professor Lord Robert Winston who gave very worthwhile encouragement to the pupils in his speech.

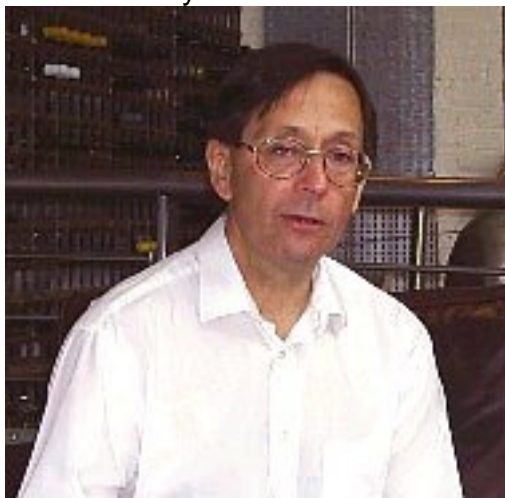
A meeting of the Committee and the group leaders was held in August to thank them for their efforts and to discuss ways in which we can develop the U3A further. A number of suggestions came up including the holding of a Quiz night. We have now put that event in the Calendar. Our first two social events were held this year, the Christmas Party and a Barn Dance in August. Both were great successes due to the hard work of a number of committee members and other volunteers. Now we are considering some more new events the committee members are looking for extra volunteers so they can lighten the burden by sharing the load. We have dates for a quiz night, a garden party, a barn dance and a Christmas Party in the calendar and have recently held an informal get together of anyone interested in helping. I understand we had some welcome suggestions at this meeting.

In April we hosted the regular six-monthly meeting of Central Surrey Region of thirteen U3As and the meeting was commented on very favourably. A new initiative that arose from these meetings was to organise study days and an initial programme of six, mainly based in the lovely building of the Royal School of Church Music at Westhumble has been set up. The first two on Box Hill in October and Portraits in November were very successful with well prepared presentations playing to full houses. Peter took on the role of acting Treasurer to the Study Day Committee and has opened a second account within Fetcham U3A for the booking fees and expenses. I hope you will all look at the programme of Study Days for the next year and consider attending those of interest. The region is also offering a conference in East Grinstead on Saturday 11th April and a summer school is being held in Chichester for South East Area from 22nd to 25th June with ten different subjects to choose from; details available at monthly meetings. I attended the Third Age Trust conference and AGM in Leicester in August. The highlight was an inspirational talk by Eric Midwinter, the sole surviving founder of the U3A movement in the UK.

He exhorted us to go out and spread the message so that more people can enjoy the activities, endeavours and friendship of the U3A movement. There were heated debates about the ways in which regional activities can best be supported. Individual U3As are proudly independent, but they can benefit from collaboration with other U3As both locally and regionally. We enjoy very good relations with Bookham and Leatherhead U3As with whom we share several interest Groups and the Study day programme is already seen as being very successful. More such endeavours will give a wide range of opportunities to members. Subject Networks are organised nationally and provide links and new ideas for Group leaders. This year I attended lectures put on for U3A audiences at the Royal Institution and the National Institute for Medical Research with first rate speakers that have been organised by the Science and Technology Network. Keep your eyes open for announcements of such events in U3A NEWS, SOURCES or our own newsletter.

Following on from the Museums Project when individuals volunteered to join Interest Groups at the main London Museums, in my case the National Maritime Museum. I have been asked to join a small Group helping Jenny expand the idea nationally in what is now known as the Shared Learning Project. The latest project was to evaluate the two new galleries at the British Museum "Living and Dying - Wellcome gallery" and "Enlightenment and Discovery in the Eighteenth Century". Watch out for news of progress in the newsletter.

At this year's AGM Peter and Patricia stood down from the Committee as Treasurer and Vice Chairman as also did Garth. Patricia and Peter played a big part from the beginning in getting Fetcham U3A going. Now it is going they feel they can devote their energies to their growing family and the newsletter. Best Wishes to you all. Ian



Our Chairman

Christmas Party

"Home Grown" entertainment, where Play Reading and Music Appreciation did their business. At the end of last year's Christmas Party those present were asked if they would like one next year. The response was a resounding yes!

So after a lot of hard work from the stalwart organisers the members and their guests duly assembled at St. Mary's Hall on the 4th December. Proceedings started with a devilish musical Quiz, devised by Brian. This was followed by a rendering of sketches put together by Geoff from the Play Reading Group.

The Players were fortunate in having the able support of Bruce and Brenda. Brenda gave a wonderful reading from Willy Rushton's 'Shirley Valentine', which left the audience convulsed with laughter.

After tea there was a most amusing performance of a highly abridged version of Dicken's 'Christmas Carol', accompanied by hysterically funny sound effects, which provided a fitting finale.

We were then engaged in dealing with the quiz answers. After this presents were distributed and then everyone settled down to the serious part of the afternoon which was singing carols lead by members of the Musical Appreciation Group ably accompanied by Enid at the piano.

The words of the Carols were projected onto a screen by our new data equipment, expertly handled by Winnie.

A member of the first Wine Appreciation group prepared the mulled wine using an old and secret recipe (which can only be found in any early edition of the "Good Housekeeping Cook Book").

The requisite 'Thank You's' completed a happy afternoon.

Group News

Painting Group Mixed Media – Margaret

We continue to explore landscape and Still Life paintings in Water Colour using different techniques. We have also used video instruction on how to use Chinese Brush painting to portray amazing bamboos and flowers on rice paper.

Parchment Craft – Eugenie

This craft is very much enjoyed by those members who attend and they are all learning new techniques. There are new ideas ready for the coming term which started on the 20th January 9.45 am. The group is not as large as at first expected and for the immediate future will only meet in the morning. There is space for a few new members. Anyone interested should Contact Genie.

Thursday Morning Walking Group - Jo & Ernie

Since the group started we have enjoyed nine walks to date. We meet on the 4th Thursday morning of each month and have yet to be rained off - mustn't speak too soon!!

Future walks planned are:

January 27th 3 miles at Shere.

Meet at 10.30am in the car park behind the village hall. A fairly flat walk with one initial incline and one stile. Refreshments in the White Horse Inn afterwards.

February 24th 3.5 miles at Epsom Downs.

Meet at Tattenham Corner Car Park (opposite the race course). The Walk is undulating in places, quite good underfoot and no stiles. Refreshments in the Rubbing House Pub afterwards.

March 24th 4 miles - Effingham Ponds.

Meet at the junction of Sole Farm Road and Little Bookham Street. Park in (Sole Farm Road). A flat walk with a number of easily negotiated stiles. Could be muddy. Refreshments in the Ye Old Windsor Castle.

All walks start at 10.30 am.

Wine Group (1) - Jo & Ernie

Following the Group's visit to Denbie's Vineyard last autumn, the largest in England with 265 acres under cultivation, at our December meeting we heard about running the smallest vineyard and winery. Our speaker had recently retired from his 2 acre vineyard in Sussex. He brought us five wines to taste and was both informative and interesting.

We have recorded Richard & Judy's Wine Club programmes, which were broadcast at the end of last year. In January we plan to watch the programmes together whilst sampling the wines it should be fun.

The group continues to enjoy a wide range of experiences in each others company.

Wine Group (2) - Geoffrey

Our monthly meetings have continued in a state of congenial harmony. We do find that gradually we are becoming more discriminating and appreciating subtleties of flavour rather than voting for the cheapest or that most closely resembling grape juice.

We replaced our December meeting with a lunch at Clandon House where we ate and drank a very enjoyable meal. An ugly scene was narrowly avoided when those drinking white wine found they had been allocated the House White whereas those drinking the red had Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Fortunately they both proved to be excellent.

Owing to members commitments we are changing our rendezvous day to the third Tuesday of each month for a trial period.

Wine Group (3) - Chris and Rosemary

We appear to be completing our arrangements for organising the new Group and have agreed the how, why and when of it. Unlike the other two groups we have agreed to meet at 7.30 pm on the 2nd Tuesday in the month.

Play Reading Group – Winnie

After a successful foray into light entertainment at the Christmas Party, the group will start again in February reading through an assortment of plays. If you are interested in joining us, please Contact either Winnie or Geoff for further details.



Members of the Play Reading Group doing their stuff, ably supported by Sound Effects Specialist Mavis.

Music Appreciation Group – Bryan

The Music Group had a very interesting end of year quiz evening of TV Themes. This got the little grey cells working overtime. Despite repeatedly telling us that she didn't watch television all those years ago. Barbara was our winner that evening.

We started this year with a superb evening of Jazz. I never realised that there was so much variation coming under the umbrella of jazz, Big Band swing, Traditional Boogie, Modern and so much more. Having enjoyed the evening so much, we all applauded loudly at the finale. Future evenings should be enjoyable with an airing of Ivor Novello, Noel Coward, Gilbert & Sullivan and even Cliff, could it be Richards, among those already planned.

Book Club - Penny and Elaine

The Book Club has been up and running since September. We have eleven members who meet in each others homes. Our first book was 'The Lovely Bones' by Alice Sebold, which prompted a lively discussion, two further books have been discussed and a poetry reading session just after Christmas. We now embark on our latest book 'The Da Vinci Code' by Dan Brown. This should set a cat amongst the pigeons!!! Religion usually does. Future books

include 'Brick Lane' 'Spies' and 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall'. (Yes we do want to re-read the Classics).

French Conversation Groups (1 & 2) - Anna and Lesley

Both groups continue to meet roughly twice a month following a similar format. A member introduces a topic of interest which is then open for discussion. One group tends to base its meetings on subjects relating to France, such as a region, a topic of current interest, or from time to time a short story by a French writer. The other group covers more general subjects based on personal experiences. These have ranged from a visit to Poland to a working tour of factories in China. It is gratifying to see the growing confidence of our members.

Computer Users – Michael and Tony

Computer Users Group Course - Tuesday 28th September to Tuesday 23rd November. For those interested in manipulation of digital images October & November were busy months. Every Tuesday evening being spent between 6.00 and 8.00 pm in classroom 21 at the Howard of Effingham School where Peter, a staff member, took us through the mysteries of how to perform black magic tricks on ones favourite images. Unfortunately our leader, Mike, found his parents health necessitated his absence more often than he would have liked, but all agreed it was a wonderfully organised course.



Our picture, taken on the final evening, shows the stalwarts who stayed the course.

The next meeting of the Computer User's Group is at 7.30pm on Wednesday 9th March at the Reading Room, Fetcham. Due to the lack of parking by the Hall, attendees are asked to park by the shops in Fetcham or in River Road. The programme will be as previous with several presentations followed by a question and answer session. If you have any computer related topic to discuss, please Contact Michael or Tony.

Outings and Visits - Sheila

Two vacancies have arisen for our six day visit to Cracow, Poland. Dates are 17th to 22nd May – Price £585.00 which includes flights, transfers, b&b at the hotel, and excursions.

If you would like to join the party please Contact Sheila for more details.

Where to next? I am wondering which locations you would like to see included in our Summer Programme. My forward planning and research points towards:

Amberley Open Air Working Museum.

Exbury Gardens, in the New Forest.

Hollycombe Steam Collection in the Sussex Weald.

All Saints Church at Tudeley, Kent for Chagall's beautiful windows.

Bateman's (NT), Rudyard Kipling's home in Sussex.

Hidcote Manor gardens (NT) in Gloucestershire.

Herstmonceaux Castle, gardens and Science Centre in East Sussex.

All of these venues provide for a variety of interests (and perhaps will encourage group members to delve deeper into a particular subject).

Hopefully, any will provide an enjoyable day out for us.

What about your ideas? What appeals to you? I look forward to your response, please Contact Sheila.

Social Events Meeting - Winnie and Yvonne

The first very successful meeting of the Social Events Team was held on the 10th January in Fetcham Village Hall. As joint co-ordinators for social events Yvonne and I had put together some thoughts during a brain storming session and these formed the basis for the initial discussion. The enthusiasm shown by the twenty members brought forth some original ideas and we were heartened by their willingness to participate in ensuring that all the events would as successful and diverse as we could make them.

If you feel you can offer your services, or indeed, have any ideas for future events please Contact either Yvonne or Winnie or indeed speak to us at a monthly meeting. We will be pleased to have your input.

2005 Events For Your Diary

Quiz Night - Organised by Penny & Bryan

Saturday 19th March 2005, at Fetcham Village Hall.

Tables of 8.

Supper supplied.

Bring your own Plates, Cutlery, Wine and Glasses.

Non-members of F&D U3A welcome.

Tickets at £6 are on Sale at January & February Monthly Meetings.

29th April Group Leaders Lunch at Fetcham Reading Rooms

15th May Garden Party at Margaret's House

17th September Barn Dance Barn Hall Bookham

9th December Christmas Party St. Mary's Hall Fetcham

28th April 2005 The Central Surrey Regional Meeting, hosted by Bookham U3A

Central Surrey Region Study Days in 2005

Friday 4th February Current Conflicts in the Middle East.

Dr Brian Beeley, Consultant for Open University World-wide.

Friday 11th March Literary Victorians.

Julia Courtney, Open University.

Friday 13th May Practical Applications of Astronomy.

Kevin Attree, Surrey University.

Saturday 16th July Romanticism into Impressionism.

Chopin & Delacroix, Debussy & Monet. Janet Canetty-Clarke, University Lecturer, Conductor & Pianist

Booking is necessary and booking forms will be available from your Secretary. We will be circulating the forms for February/March in November and for May/July in February. Jennifer acts as bookings secretary.

Volunteering

Volunteering Is Good For Your Health - and The Grange centre needs you!

Volunteers are needed to help work with the tutors in the Creative Textile Workshop. If you have a few hours to spare on a regular basis – your help would be warmly welcomed and very much appreciated.

The Grange Centre provides both work and a home for disabled adults of varying ages. The textile department is in urgent need of helpers to assist the tutors, and work alongside individual clients.

If you would like to help, please contact The Grange Centre, Rectory Lane.