

June—December 2021 Magazine

19th September.

Welcome to the Magazine for the second half of 2021. Since the lifting in stages of the lockdown, life has been getting back to normal. The virus still presents a threat to health but, as long as we are careful and follow the government's advice we should be able to live normally, go shopping normally, and go to a restaurant and public house. Booking still seems to be the order of the day, but that is not too obtrusive to normal life. The next step is to take up the offer of a booster jab during the autumn. That is said to be able to improve the average person's ability to fight off the virus. Social distancing and mask wearing is also recommended.

Heart of England u3a News.

The Methodist Church premises are now open for normal services, except that we are asked to avoid using the kitchens until safe practices have been decided. One can bring in a drink in a flask but do make yourself aware of the safe practices in the building.

Our first meeting was in September and a short report is in this issue. Monthly meetings will happen at 2.00pm on the first Thursday of each month as was our normal practice. The AGM will be in November this year and you are reminded to pay your subscription before then. Payment can be by cheque through the post, by cash in an envelope with payment details handed to Sue Tringham at a meeting, on-line or by cash at the Lloyds Bank in Stratford, again with name and payment details.

21st October 2021

Some groups have already started to meet—these include The Choir, SNATTs, Bridge (I think). We shall see more details in the next Newsletter at the end of September. The

Newsletter is now being edited and produced by Jayne Jones who has recently returned to Stratford. Other groups that have re-opened include Garden Appreciation Group, Classical Music Group, Walking Group, Chinwags, Diners Group and China Discussion Group. Efforts are being made to re-open other groups— Craft, Card Making. All Swing & Jazz Group is due to start again on Thursday 28th October. Grumpy Old Men was due to meet on Wednesday 20th October. All three Reading Groups have re-started.

2nd November 2021

A very short report from the Walking Group is included with a group photograph. It looks like it was a bit misty, but I suggest that is quite likely during the autumn.

If any other groups want a report included please let me have an email with suggested text and any photographs you may have taken. We do not name and shame in these reports!

September Meeting - Thursday 2nd September 2021 Talk about the Human Brain by Dr Kate Bellamy

The first meeting in September was organised as a talk during the first part of the meeting, followed by business at the end. Attendance was about 80 members.

Dr Kate Bellamy gave us a very entertaining and humorous talk on aspects of the brain, including 'busting some myths' about the brain and how it works.



General view of meeting and audience below

October Main Meeting—Thursday 7th October 2021 The History of Johnsons Coaches by Wendy Moore

Wendy told us how the Johnson family started a business in 1909 with a flatbed lorry taking farm produce from the Henley area to Birmingham market. From the start, they were based in premises at the north end of High Street on the right hand side (east side No 71). They later (1932) transferred to the opposite side of the road where there was an arch in the buildings leading to yard behind. (No 32) The lorry (s) had been causing traffic problems on the high street.

After a while they were being asked to carry passengers on their lorry, so they converted it to a bus van.

Their business included furniture removals in the early years and the business was quite small. In 1956 they were operating 2 lorries and 2 coaches and an old taxi.

In 1977/8 two third generation family members, Peter and John, joined the firm.

Better coaches were bought and in 1981 the company ran its first coach holidays and

excursions. More coaches were bought and by 1987 the furniture removal business had ceased. New premises were bought at the current site on Liversedge Hill and the 32 High Street premises were sold.

During the next few years the buildings now on the Liversedge Hill site were built and the company expanded, partly by absorbing other smaller coach companies. In 1999 the company changed its coach livery to the now familiar blue, yellow and white design.

In 2000 the company commenced bus operations for the first time.

During the years since the company has won many prestigious awards for the excellence of their performance as coach, bus and holiday operators.

The last 2 years have been difficult due to the restrictions imposed during the Covid19 pandemic but the coach business is continuing to operate as is the bus business.



Group Photograph
About 100 attended

Garden Appreciation Group visit to National Trust Hidcote Gardens Tuesday 12th October 2021

Eight members of the group met for elevenses in the Barn Café at Hidcote. It was a dry day with some sunshine but with a slight chill in the air, so we were glad of our light-weight jackets, both whilst chatting and drinking coffee in the outdoor café and whilst walking around the gardens later.

There was still plenty of colour in the gardens despite the late season and little evi-

dence of autumn. Gardeners were everywhere working at the autumnal tasks and the gardens looked very good, despite the reduced care during the pandemic earlier in the year. After a session in the shop and a quick look in the second-hand book shop, we separated to make our way home.

A few photographs taken on the day follow below.



Left—The Pond Garden

Below—Some of the members walking past the Pond Garden with the hot house behind.



**Garden Appreciation Group visit to
National Trust Hidcote Gardens
Tuesday 12th October 2021**



Left — Colour by the Hot House



Left — Bright colours and individual plants by the Hot House.

**Garden Appreciation Group visit to
National Trust Hidcote Gardens
Tuesday 12th October 2021**



Above — Individual colour blooms on a shrub.

Below — Bright colours in a square bed by the house.



The Walking Group Wednesday 13th October 2021 Walk starting from Welford-on-Avon

The members met on Headland Road in Welford-on-Avon for a 5 mile walk. The route was mainly on hard paths or roads. Valerie and Fred Redfern led the walk in reasonable weather. There was a pause about half way round for a drink and a chat.



Walking Group pictured during the walk.