Heart of England

Newsletter editor: **hofe.u3a@gmail.com**
Membership Secretary: Mike Genge: mikegenge@sky.com
Treasurer: Glynis McDougall: Glynismcdougall1@gmail.com
Website:**https://heartofengland.u3asite.uk**



October 2026 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING

1st Oct -- Jess Nash "Tales from the driver's seat – a woman bus driver in the 1970s"

DATES FOR YOUR 2026 DIARY (All talks start at 2pm)

5th Nov - Paul Thornber "The Rising of the sun; the story of the unknown Soldier"
3rd Dec - Steven Bruce "Buying & selling at auction: with stories from the auction room" Followed by Antiques Roadshow

** Please check the website "Events" for a list of speakers for 2026*

FROM THE CHAIR — David Haggarty

As previously advised, our AGM will be held at the start of our 1st October monthly meeting when attendees will be nominating and seconding committee members for 2026/7. A copy of the nomination list was sent out to members at the same time as the September newsletter and displayed at the September meeting.
We have three vacancies that we need other H of E members to come forward to fill. Treasurer (Officer post), Newsletter Secretary and Archivist. A number of other committee members have been in post for many years and are considering standing down. If we don't have the three officer posts filled, or cannot make up a quorum of at least five committee members, then there is a strong chance that Heart of England u3a will have to be closed. The groups will not be able to meet and members will have to transfer to another u3a. If you feel you are able to contribute to our u3a, you would be warmly welcomed. Please email me at. **d-haggarty@outlook.com**
The annual subscription of £20 for 2026/27 was due on 1st September. (£25 if you wish to receive the Third Age Matters Magazine). CASH - please pay with the exact amount. CHEQUE - made payable to Heart of England u3a. (Post to Glynis McDougall, 34 Swan Court, Banbury Road, Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 6HG)
CREDIT TRANSFER - Online or at a branch of Lloyds, account Name: Heart of England u3a, Sort Code: 30-98-26 Account No: 00617394, include your name as reference. Also, over the counter in person at any Lloyds Bank, quoting all the above details, and your name as a reference.
Just confirming our coffee morning at the Pen & Parchment at 10.30am Wednesday 21st October. All welcome.

ALL THAT SWINGS AND JAZZ — Sue Tringham

At our September meeting in the Lounge of the Methodist Hall, Coral presented a great programme featuring many female artistes. Good to be reminded of them in a male dominated jazz world!! John does a great job of actually making the music play!! As usual, not sure yet who will be presenting the programme at our next meeting on Thursday 29th October at 2pm at the Methodist Church but rest assured, someone will!! Look forward to meeting up with everyone. .

United Nations Day 24th October



Daylight Saving ends 25th October



Halloween 31st October



SEPTEMBER SPEAKER REPORT **Tim Folan**

Henry Chance was unable to attend due to jury service so Mark Davies, Chair of the Chance Heritage Trust, kindly stepped in. The firm was at one time the biggest glassworks in the world. Founded in 1824 they became renowned for high quality lenses used in hundreds of lighthouses around the world. They also produced, in a mere 9 months and by hand, all the glazing for the Crystal Palace at the heart of the 1851 Great Exhibition. During the 20th century they also made cathode ray tubes for Baird when he was developing television. This expertise won them contracts for glass items (gun sights, RADAR tubes etc.) during WW11. Unfortunately this led to cash flow problems and Chance were gradually acquired by rival Pilkington; who took control in 1952. Over time the business wound down and the Smethwick site closed in 1981. The heritage trust began in 2015 to preserve the remaining buildings and turn the site into an economic regeneration hub for the local area. Mark talked about the difficulties of managing a project containing no fewer than 8 grade II* listed buildings and the complexities of navigating local politics.

BOOK CLUB MONDAY **Jackie Biggs**

We read Someone Else's Shoes by Jo Jo Moyes. The book follows the lives of two very different women who pick up each other's bags by mistake at the gym. While we thought the characters were not realistic and there were too many coincidents, generally we enjoyed the book and would recommend it as an enjoyable holiday read.

BOOK CLUB – WEDNESDAY **Gillian Caveney**

This month's choice was All the Lonely People by Mike Gayle. Written across a then and now timeline the novel describes the life of Hubert Bird, an elderly, lonely West Indian widower and the effect the arrival of a new neighbour asking for help has on him. Although the novel touches on themes of loss, discrimination and social isolation it was a positive and uplifting read.

BRIDGE CLUB **David Whitbread**

The Bridge Group provides a friendly and stimulating weekly meeting. Members have a range of bridge skills, from beginners with the basics up to well-trodden experience. If you, or a friend with U3A membership, is interested in joining in, try us out on a Tuesday afternoon. We meet in the Methodist Church Centre for a couple of hours, with up to four tables, with a weekly charge of about £ 3 per player for the room. Parking is usually available.
For more information, have a word with Keith Rockett (01926-863-143) or David Whitfield (01564-771-550). We represent the range of bridge skills !

CARD MAKING CLUB **Angela Ramsey & Jane Edkins**

We welcome new-comers to join us for a relaxing few hours, trying new techniques and producing cards for ourselves and for sale at monthly meetings. Base cards of different sizes and colours, A4 white and coloured card, backing papers and accessories are all provided.
We were busy making Christmas cards at the September workshop for sale at the next couple of monthly meetings. Find Angela and Jane at the sale table located now in the main hall. All the proceeds from the card sales will be donated to a local charity to be selected. Next workshop: Friday, 23rd October, 12.30 to 4.00, in the new room. For more information, please chat with Angela and Jane at the card sale table or email Robyn, at **redbird22@hotmail.co.uk**

CHINWAGS **Glynis Holloway**

We are a small friendly group which meets on the 4th Monday of each month at 12.30pm in Bistrot Pierre to enjoy a nice lunch and good conversation. Our next lunch will take place on Monday October 26th. For more information contac**t, glynisa.holloway@gmail.com.**

CHOIR **David Haggarty**

We performed our concert "We Got Rhythm", at the Stratford Methodist Centre on Friday 18th September to an enthusiastic audience of 93. We now start rehearsing for our Christmas concert and would welcome anyone wishing to join us whether experienced singers or beginners. We meet every Friday, 10.30 to 12.00 at the Stratford Methodist Centre**.** For more information contact **d-haggarty@outlook.com**

COMPUTER GROUP - offering I-T assistance for our members. **Robyn Nicoll**

An organiser is required for the Computer Group. Please let Barbara Whitting, our Interest Groups Coordinator, know if you would be willing to arrange short courses for members. Thank you Robyn

CLASSICAL MUSIC GROUP **Edwin Lilly & Graeme Ramsey**

At the September meeting of the Classical Music Group, David Gallichan provided a delightful programme of music consisting of popular excerpts from Bizet's opera "Carmen" featuring the powerful American opera singer Jessye Norman singing the lead role. The programme also included complete performances of Saint-Saens' Second Piano Concerto and Brahms's Symphony No.3. The next meeting will be held on Thursday afternoon, 8th October, in the Lounge at the Methodist Church Centre, starting at 2 pm. Come along and enjoy a convivial afternoon listening to a selection of the world's greatest music.

We have the meetings until Christmas planned and organised. If you would like to contribute to the meetings during next year, give it some thought and talk or message to us your ideas that you would like to pursue.

CREATIVE CRAFT GROUP **Robyn Nicoll**

The Crafters meet monthly on the 2nd Monday afternoon at the Methodist Church, 2.00pm to 4.00pm in the reception area. The Crafters would welcome new members to join us for a relaxing afternoon each month. We are preparing small novelties to sell at the November and December monthly meetings and all proceeds will be donated to a local charity. Suggestions for our donation would be welcomed. We plan to hold an Origami afternoon at the November meeting and invite members along to join in the project. We will be creating a tree decoration which could also be used to make a simple card. See some samples on the reception table. Please let Robyn know if you would like to come along on Monday 9th November.

Next Get-together: Monday, 12th October.

For more information about the Group please contact Robyn. **redbird22@hotmail.co.uk**

CURRENT AFFAIRS **Sylvia Bevan**

We had wide ranging conversations at our last meeting and will next meet on Wednesday 14th October 2pm in the upstairs community room at the Guild cottages opposite the council offices. Enter through the double wood doors and you will be met. New members are very welcome as are topics for discussion , there is always plenty to talk about . For more information contact Sylvia at **john.bevan573@btinternet.com**

DINAHS **Sylvia Crooks**

We next meet on Tuesday 6thOctober at the Pen & Parchment for lunch. Look forward to seeing everyone for a chat about what they have been doing in the last month.

FINE DINING **Ingrid Rooney**

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month to sample the better restaurants in Stratford Upon Avon. For more information contact me at **ingrid.rooney@yahoo.com**

GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP **Suzy Genge**

Our group visited the Lord Leicester Hospital garden in Warwick this month. It was a Heritage open day and we could join a guided tour around the historic garden after a delicious refreshment in the cafe. Some of the garden was 500 years old, partly surrounded by the old city wall of Warwick, including a croquet lawn and a vegetable plot among other interesting sections. Next month is on Tuesday 8th October when we shall meet at Packworth house, in the car park at 10am.

GRUMPY OLD MEN **Keith Riste**

The Grumpy Old Men Group urgently requires some additional members. As stated in the regular Newsletters, we meet on the third Wednesday of each month at the Stratford Sports Club, where we have lunch and engage in a lively and usually humorous discussion on a chosen subject or on a variety of matters of general interest. We are not really Grumpy at all!

If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact the Secretary Keith Riste by email at **keithriste@yahoo.com**

HISTORY GROUP **Robert Tringham**

The Group met on 16th December to consider the origins of languages. We discussed the findings that all languages devolved from the first African Tongue which was the cradle of all modern languages. We saw photographs of ancient carvings especially the Java Shells carved by Homo Erectus 500,000 years ago. We also looked at "Lucy" who walked upright and is likely a Homo Erectus but lived 3.2 million years ago. We considered whether a dog barks in different languages, or birds sing in their own local language. Part 2 of origins of languages will continue in similar theme in December. Please check the website for further information or contact me at **hofe.u3a.com**

KEEP FIT **Jan Jones**

Our small friendly group consists of both males and females of mixed abilities. The class is designed for our age group, with standing and sitting exercises We meet every Thursday morning from 10 -11am in the Parish Centre at St Andrews Church in Shottery. We have an excellent tutor and really enjoy the exercises and a chat. At present there is a waiting list, but please contact me If you are interested in finding out more about the group. **janljones@aol.com**

Scrabble, Dominoes and Card Games **Sue Tringham**

We normally meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month from 2pm until 4pm in the Foyer of the Methodist Church. It's a light hearted afternoon of fun, laughter and conversation! In October we will meet on the 5th and 19th. Tea, coffee and biscuits at 3. All welcome!!

SNATTS **Mike Genge**

We enjoyed a very well-produced talk from Colin Stewart on the design and construction of the Barcelona Cathedral, Sagrada Familia. The audience, which included a number of guests from other groups, were totally absorbed and many are booking second trips to Barcelona to check out what we now know!
Next month Mike Genge will be talking about Latitude and Longitude and how these were measured and became the standard tool for navigation. For more information contact me at **mikegenge@sky.com**

THEATRE GROUP **Glynis McDougall**

Our September visit was again to the Bear Pit for "Home I'm Darling" a comedy, that was very entertaining. Our next theatre visit is to the Bear Pit again for Mist over Avalon on Friday 16th October 7:30. Contact me or sign up at the meeting if you are interested. It is Friday night not Thursday our usual night**,** **glynismcdougall1@gmail.com**

WALKING GROUP **Lin Randall**

Our next walk is on Wednesday 14th October at 10am starting from Lye Green Road, Claverdon which is on the north side of the A4189. This walk is about 4 miles along lovely, quiet country lanes with no hills and no stiles! Further details from Lin.

**** NEWSLETTER EDITOR REQUIRED****

After four years Robert is retiring from the role of Newsletter editor, and is seeking a member to take over from him. The role involves receiving updates from team leaders, pasting photos and pictures of group or local events, adding interesting features to make the newsletter an easy and pleasant read. Full training will be given, and Robert will be available to assist with any technical help needed until the new editor is fully confident with the role. Robert will continue to upload the Newsletters to the Website each month and update it as needed. Anyone interested in knowing more, please contact David Haggarty at **d-haggarty@outlook.com** or Robert at **hofe.u3a@gmail.com**

Outside Views of Lord Leycester hospital





Garden Group Visit Lord Leycester hospital



TEA /COFFEE ROTA 2026
Refreshment Co-ordinator
Gillian Edwards, email: gillian_edwards50@hotmail.co.uk

Group Leaders please check the Newsletter for your rota.

Below is a list of the interest Groups that will be responsible for serving tea and coffee each month.

Oct	-	History	-	Nov	-	SNATTS	-	Dec	-	Keep fit
Jan	-	Theatre Group	-	Feb	-	Bridge	-	March	-	Grumpy Old Men

Copy via email **hofe.u3a@gmail.com** for November 2026 Newsletter by 27th October 2026