Heart of England

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November 2026 Newsletter

TODAY'S MEETING
5th Nov -- Paul Thornber "The Rising of the Sun; the story of the unknown Soldier"

DATES FOR YOUR 2026/27 DIARY (All talks start at 2pm)

3rd Dec - Steven Bruce - "Buying & selling at auction: with stories from the auction room. Followed by Antiques Roadshow"

7th Jan - Fran Sandham - "Dr Livingstone I presume"

** Please check the website "Events" for a list of speakers for 2026/27*

FROM THE CHAIR **David Haggarty**

At our AGM in October we had three members come forward to take up the vacant posts in our committee, David Doubtfire as Treasurer, Jackie Doubtfire Archivist and David Smith committee member. Many thanks to those three. We do still need someone to take over producing our Newsletter from Robert Tringham who will provide all the necessary guidance required. If you are interested please contact me at **d-haggarty@outlook.com** The annual subscription to our u3a for 2026/27 was due on 1st September. The cost is £20per year (£25 if you wish to receive the Third Age Matters Magazine). Payment can be made in the following ways -
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, CV376HG)
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. Please remember that, under u3a rules, you cannot be a member of a group without current membership
Also I regret that our coffee morning at the Pen & Parchment has been paused for the moment until there is more interest from members.
David

ALL THAT SWINGS AND JAZZ **Sue Tringham**

At our October meeting in the Lounge of the Methodist Hall, we tried a new format organised by Coral with a selection of different jazz musicians chosen by various people. As usual, not sure yet who will be presenting the programme at our next meeting on Thursday 26 November at 2pm at the Methodist Church but rest assured, someone will!!
Look forward to meeting up with everyone.

Remembrance Sunday
8th November



Bonfire Night
5th November



USA Thanksgiving
26th November



OCTOBER SPEAKER REPORT **Tim Folan**

Jess Nash treated members to a lively and humorous talk about her life as one of the earliest women bus drivers in the UK. In 1972 she was in her early 20s, divorced, and needed a job to pay the rent - a job as a bus conductor seemed ideal. The first driver she was paired with was called Roger Moore and she was J Mansfield at the time - a couple of names that did not amuse a police officer when they were pulled over for a minor traffic offence. After a while Jess decided she wanted to take the wheel, rather a challenge for a 5'2" woman who could not even drive! Bus drivers needed to hold a licence for 3 years before applying so Jess took a job driving an ambulance and after the passing of the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act saw an advert for London Country Buses and gave it a go. Her height made it hard to reach the pedals and buses at that time took a lot of physical effort to drive but she persisted and took her test during a snowstorm. Her first day out on her own driving in St Albans was also challenged by bad weather (and her sole passenger also wanted to transport a goat) Icy roads and an over helpful tractor driver ended up with Jess returning to the garage with both the back and front panels of her bus ripped off. Despite this rocky start she carried on until London Country was sold in 1986 as part of bus privatisation. Jess transferred to London Transport based at the Hendon garage. She perfected a gym routine that enabled her to get into the high cab of the famous Routemaster buses she was now driving. As all the drivers were men and all the conductors women no one quite knew where Jess should sit in the canteen when on her break. Many female conductors were married to male drivers and the atmosphere could be difficult at times. Jess persisted however, was promoted to be one of the first female revenue inspectors, and had a long career before taking early retirement. At 80 years of age she still drives a community minibus!

BOOK CLUB MONDAY **Jackie Biggs**

We read Last stories by William Trevor, a collection of short stories published posthumously by the Irish Protestant writer. They speak of lost opportunities, good intentions, inner solitude, doubts, ambiguities and grief in an intense, sad, detailed and subtle manner. They are beautifully written stories of the human condition but not a book to pick up if you are in need of cheering up.

BOOK CLUB – WEDNESDAY **Gillian Caveney**

This month's choice was Anxious People by Fredrick Backman, another novel which divided the group. Most of us thought it was difficult to get into- a puzzle with pieces that eventually came together, as characters' back stories became clearer and its themes of loneliness, relationships and vulnerabilty rippled out from a particular death. However, those of us who persevered felt it was worth the effort.

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 newcomers 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 again making Christmas cards at the October workshop for sale at the next monthly meeting. Find Angela and Jane at the sale table located in the main hall. All the proceeds from the card sales will be donated to The Shakespeare Hospice. Next workshop: Friday, 27th November, 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 who meet 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 24th November. For more information contact**, glynisa.holloway@gmail.com.**

CHOIR **David Haggarty**

We have now started rehearsing for our Christmas concert on 18 th December 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**

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

At the October meeting of the Classical Music Group, we heard a very varied programme of music. It began with a light-hearted overture by Rossini, followed by three piano pieces by Rachmaninov. Then we heard a highly emotive symphonic portrayal by Shostakovich of the 1905 Russian Revolution massacre. After the tea and biscuits interval, the programme continued with Gershwin's jazzy "American in Paris" and ended with the serenely romantic Violin Concerto No.1 by Max Bruch. The next meeting will be held on Thursday afternoon, 12th November in the Lounge at the Methodist Church Centre, starting at 2 pm. For our Christmas meeting in December, we shall be screening the musical video "Fantasia" --- Walt Disney's brilliant interpretations in animated form of various wellknown works by famous classical composers.

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,

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. We have prepared small novelties to sell at the next two monthly meetings and all proceeds will be donated to The MND Association Local Branch. The sale table will be in the main hall and you will find gifts for family members/friends at very reasonable prices (most things are priced at £1).
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. Everything will be supplied but you will need to bring a pencil, scissors and glue.
Next Get-together: Monday, 9th November. For more information about the Group please contact Robyn. **redbird22@hotmail.co.uk**

CURRENT AFFAIRS **Sylvia Bevan**

Our next meeting is Wednesday 11th November at 2pm in the upstairs community room of the Guild cottages . Enter through the double wood doors opposite the council offices and you will be met. We had some good conversations last meeting and will have the budget as a topic in November. New members very welcome as are any topics for discussion.
For more information contact Sylvia at **john.bevan573@btinternet.com**

DINAHS **Sylvia Crooks**

We next meet on Tuesday 3rd November 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**

The Fine Dining group meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month to sample the restaurants in Stratford. This month we went to The Red Lion. We had a very enjoyable time and great food.
For more information contact **ingridrooney@yahoo.com**

GARDEN APPRECIATION GROUP **Suzy Genge**

We had a sunny trip to Packwood house this month. A very interesting visit inside the house, as well as a tour of the gardens. The colours of the autumn flowers were lovely. Next month we shall visit New Place garden in Stratford. Meet for coffee first in Hotel Indigo at 10am or New Place at 11

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 earlier this year 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 November we will meet on the 2nd and 16th. Tea, coffee and biscuits at 3. All welcome!!

SNATTS **Mike Genge**

For our October meeting we had a talk from Mike Genge about the determination of Latitude and Longitude, from ancient Egyptians to later measurement projects and the development of maritime clocks. Next month we will hear from Ian Roberts on Getting from Here to There. I'm sure Ian will give his usual great insight into this topic. For more information contact me at **mikegenge@sky.com**

THEATRE GROUP **Glynis McDougall**

The November theatre visit is on 5th November to the Attic Theatre for Sweeney Todd. I am not arranging anything in December and the theatres don't normally reopen until March. Have a good Christmas everyone Glynis **glynismcdougall1@gmail.com**

WALKING GROUP **Lin Randall**

Our next walk is on Wednesday 11th November at 10am and takes us round the perimeter of Ettington and into the open countryside. It's about four miles, easy walking with no stiles and a couple of slight slopes. We'll park along the Old Warwick Road which is the first turning left as you enter the village. 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**



New Years Lunch



We will be holding our Heart of England u3a Lunch again in January 2027 at a date to be fixed. Look for future information in the December Newsletter

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.

Nov	-	SNATTS	-	Dec	-	Keep fit	-	January	-	Theatre Group	
Feb	-	Bridge	-	March	-	Grumpy Old Men	-	April	-	Card making	

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