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**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
CRAWLEY**

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Enclosed with this Newsletter

1. Programme 2011—2012
2. Booking form for Spring Outing April 2012

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Speakers for our Friday afternoon meetings at
the Friary Hall, Haslett Avenue
2.30 p.m.**

9th December
Bernard Lockett
"Gilbert & Sullivan"

2012

13th January
Gillian Pitt
"Quakers in Sussex"

10th February
Jane Shrimpton
"Dating Photographs by Dress"

9th March
Mary Forlenza
"Whistle-stop Tour of Italy"

13th April
Paul Whittle
"Tsars & Commissars"

11th May
Dr. Peter Maggs
"Henry's Trials"

Study Days

Please refer to your printed programme and the Notice Board at the Friday meetings at the Friary Hall, where you will find additional items that may be of interest.

Booking forms are available from Brenda Broom who can be contacted on 01293 882674.

**Crawley U3A website: www.crawleyu3a.org.uk
Please send your news and views to Don, our
webmaster. Contact:
don.sadler@blueyonder.co.uk or**

Chairman's Letter



My role as your Chairman has already involved me in a range of very interesting activities both in and beyond Crawley.

The first was our meeting in September to launch our new year. Group Leaders were available at tables across the Friary Hall. It was good to see people chatting to prospective new members of their groups and greeting friends made in earlier years. This was a great occasion for reunions after the summer break, and for welcoming new members to U3A.

There is a new group, Country Dancing with Bob Weddell, which started meeting on 24th October. It will meet fortnightly on Mondays at 10.15 a.m. at St Paul's Methodist Church, Northgate. Barbara Hanson, our Groups Co-ordinator, can tell you about this and also about the plans for the new Family History group which it is hoped will be ready for take off in the new year.

In mid September I went to the Conference and AGM of the Third Age Trust (our 'umbrella' organisation). My report of this which was held at Nottingham University is in this newsletter. I have just heard that some of the talks are now available on CD and we will obtain a copy which our members can borrow.

Further meetings I have attended and enjoyed were the New Members meeting in mid October and the South East Forum seminar at Tonbridge School a week later. The New Members gave an opportunity to meet and learn more about U3A here in Crawley in Sussex and nationally.

At Tonbridge the focus was on widening knowledge and understanding of U3A and its opportunities and launching new U3As. We also heard about the International scene from a member of a Surrey U3A who is Treasurer of the International Association of U3As and recently attended a seminar in Venice..

Meanwhile I am involved in planning the next Summer School at Chichester (3 -6 July 2012) and attending study days and groups. U3A certainly keeps me busy.

Gillian Pitt

Report on National Conference of the Third Age Trust

Recently I attended the Third Age Trust National Conference and Annual General Meeting with about 200 U3A members from various parts of the UK. The Conference opened on Saturday morning with the Chairman declaring that we gathered to celebrate U3A at almost thirty. This was illustrated by the opening section of the new DVD filmed at four diverse U3As. This DVD is available to all U3As on request

The theme 'celebration' continued with readings of members' responses to the invitation to write on "What the U3A has meant to me". Their contributions are eloquent testimony to the life enhancing experiences membership has brought them.

There followed a talk from Estelle Morris, Minister of Education in the late nineties. Estelle spoke of the importance of informal education claiming that U3As, self-created self-determining organisations concerned with the way we live our lives, were pushing the boundaries of learning where we are all teachers and learners. Estelle told us of her work with learning initiatives in care-homes where success has been measured by the drop in the use of incontinence pads and drugs !

The afternoon was given to themed discussion groups. I joined one on "Keeping your U3A vibrant" based on the paper issued in the discussion series last November. Our discussion was wide ranging drawing on members' experience of "warning signs" and some possible remedies. Ways of integrating new members were considered as were ways of keeping the committee in touch with members. My second discussion group on Communications was not so rewarding though again wide ranging covering communications between the Trust and U3As, the role of the Regional Trustee, internal communications and the role of general meetings as well as use of websites and emails.

Sunday was Annual General Meeting day with a prologue and epilogue of science lectures by consummate communicators. The first, by Professor Peter Kalms on 'Particles and the Universe' was a wonderful demonstration of the presentation of complex material and ideas with great clarity. However, I was not alone in finding this quite mind-blowing. At the end of the day. Heinz Wolf, well-known from TV, asked "Who wants to go to Mars - How. When and Why" conveying a lot of

information with great skill and humour.

In the AGM we learned that there are now 820 U3As in the UK with a total of 270,000 members giving an 8.6% increase year on year. However, this is still only 2% of the retired population and the aim is to continue growing at this rate.

The election for Chair was contested and resulted in the election of Ian Searle for a third term. Beth Butler and Janet Whitehouse were elected as Vice Chairs and Pam Jones of Witney is our new Regional Trustee. Pam has been Secretary of the Thames Valley Network.

The Treasurer, Terry Hardie, gave his valedictory address as he was retiring after six years. The details of his statement are in the Annual Report. The main outcome is that the £102,489 overall increase in reserves puts us in a stronger position than expected owing to an insurance surplus and increase in advertising revenue. This means that the losses of the last two years have been recovered, though reserves are still below what is considered a safe level.

Two resolutions were considered. The first, from Fetcham U3A, concerned with recognition of local networks in communications from the Third Age Trust was passed overwhelmingly whilst the second, on incorporation of U3A within the title of the Trust generated some favourable comment heard by NEC members but was not passed.

On our last morning we heard from two notable academics, Professor Beynon of the Institute for Life Long Learning at Leicester who spoke on 'Learning in an Ageing Society' considering demographics of our ageing population and the implications for the future. Dr Eric Midwinter, one of our founders, reminisced on his work with Michael Young and Peter Laslett creating U3As in the early 1980s.

As is often with conferences one of the main benefits for me was meeting with members of other U3As. Comparing their activities and ways of operating showed me the great diversity that exists. The autonomy of U3As means that each responds to local circumstances in their own way whilst the Trust acts as supporter and advisor. I think that I learned a lot from this conference and I shall only know how much and in what way it can be useful as I move on with my new role as Chairman.

Gillian Pitt

*The Lea Valley Olympic Tour Summer outing
July 2011*



It is a truth universally acknowledged that Crawley U3A organises excellent outings, and this was no exception. Thankfully there were no major hold ups on the journey, so we reached Broxbourne, on the Hertfordshire/Essex borders in reasonable time to enjoy a 90 minute cruise on the River Lea. Our narrow boat "Lady of Lea Valley" was waiting, with very welcome coffee and Danish pastries for us to enjoy while we drifted through the lovely countryside of the Lee Valley Park. There was a certain amount of daydreaming about lottery wins as we drooled over the very desirable houses on the river's edge. It was good to see the number of families taking advantage of the good summer holiday weather to hire boats, and we waved back to the children in truly regal manner.

Our blue badge guide gave lots of snippets of interesting information as we drove through the Essex/Hertfordshire countryside, a part of England which is sometimes unfairly labelled as "flat" and "boring". Well, yes, if you think of the areas surrounding the M25 and the Dartford crossing, but certainly not once away from the main thoroughfares.

Our next stop was Waltham Abbey, a delightful market town packed full of historical interest with picturesque buildings at every turn. We made our own lunch arrangements; I joined friends in an excellent cafe, while others sought out a pub or had picnics in the lovely Abbey grounds. A friend and I had just enough time for a visit to Waltham Abbey Church, which, again, had us overdosing on history. Harold Godwinsson, later King Harold II, rebuilt the church in the 1050s, and after his death at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 his body was taken to Waltham Abbey. The stones marking the supposed spot of his burial are just to the east of the present church. Inside the church, most of which dates from around 1120, we admired the substantial work from the 1860s including a beautiful painted ceiling, stained glass by Edward Burne-Jones and an altar frieze by Thomas Nicholls.

All too soon we were back on the coach for a drive through Epping Forest, beloved of TV soap villains and of historical villains too: the highwaymen of the 18th century. Dick Turpin was from this area, a brutal thug and highway robber who terrorised local travellers until he was pursued to York, where he was hanged. In the 19th century he began to be regarded as a romantic figure; very far from the truth. Formerly Waltham Forest, it is much reduced from its origins as a royal forest, under Henry III in the 12th century, but still covers 6,000 acres and 12 miles, stretching from

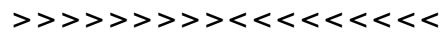
Manor Park in East London to Epping, Essex. It is the largest public open space in the London area, thanks to the Epping Forest Act of 1878, appointing the City of London as conservator.

It is hard to believe that the forest is so close to London, but within 45 minutes, after an interesting drive through the more salubrious parts of the London outskirts, including Woodford, the constituency of Winston Churchill from 1945 to 1964, we were approaching the Olympic site. Many of us had been on the spring 2010 outing, and it was fascinating to see the developments, including the Anish Kapoor "Orbit" sculpture nearing completion. At 120 metres this will be the tallest public art installation in Britain, and our guide confidently assured us it will become as iconic as the Eiffel Tower in Paris. You heard it here first, folks!

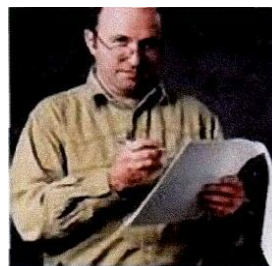
After a short stop at the Excel Centre for afternoon tea, a chance to admire Lee Johnson's sculpture of dockers outside, and to reflect on the immense changes in this area since it was primarily docks and warehouses, we said "goodbye" to our guide and made the journey home to Crawley.

As always our thanks must go to Pam Binns and the rest of the committee who helped to arrange this fascinating day out. Here's to the next one!

Jean Austin



Friday Mirthquake



Nick Thomas

Our monthly meeting at the Friary on October 14th was entertained, informed and treated to an insight into comedy writing by Nick Thomas that secured our rapt attention, interrupted only by spasms of laughter as he recounted the many and varied hilarious incidents that comprised his long and fascinating career as a comedy writer. His career with the BBC Light Entertainment programmes spans two decades, and notably includes his contributions to 'The News Huddlines'.

His speaking career began in the nineties, and he has, to date, completed more than five hundred engagements. How fortunate we were to have booked him. Jean Kirby, who recently completed nine years as our speaker organiser, deserves special praise for this inspired choice.

Because there are several Nick Thomases in the media, Nick writes as Nick R. Thomas to avoid confusion. On stating his name whilst applying for a BBC pass he was asked: 'How do you spell Nickar?' Just one of the many gems he recounted during his fascinating talk.

It was striking how precarious a career like Nick's has been. He frequently did not know when and how much he would be paid for his efforts. To carry on

“Application for Funding from Crawley U3A to Present a Model of U3A Self Help Learning.”

The U3A National Office sent the necessary information and application forms to enable applications for up to £100.00. Our application was successful and their cheque soon followed.

The required report on the event was sent to U3A National Office shortly after the event.

CRAWLEY U3A OPEN MEETING

Friday 9 September 2011, 2.30 – 4.00p.m.

Our Annual Open Meeting was held in our usual meeting hall for our Monthly Meetings. Almost all our Group Leaders or their Representatives attended. This follows on from our recent display in the Public Library.

The room had been arranged with circular tables and chairs for the various subject areas. Notices were displayed to indicate the subject and name of the Group Leader. A plan of the room was displayed showing the location of each Group. Tea/coffee and biscuits were provided.

One hundred and forty seven people signed in. This was in addition to the forty or so Group Leaders, or their Representatives, who talked with people making enquiries about the activities of their group. If a group was already full, then the Leader or Representative took the name and telephone number. A member had offered to lead a new group for Folk Dancing and he took enough names to make a start shortly.

Thirty eight new members joined at the meeting and a number of others took away information to complete later or give to a friend who was not able to be there. Other new members had joined already by post in recent weeks. Thirty members renewed their membership, though renewing membership by post had been encouraged by a note in the last Newsletter.

Gillian Pitt, our current Chairman, welcomed everyone and spoke about the Monthly Meeting and the various activities. At our next Committee Meeting later this week, we shall reflect on the afternoon and try to address the situation of groups with waiting lists.

We are grateful for the grant from the Third Age Trust which covered the costs for the meeting.

In the near future, we shall hold our usual “New Members Meeting” to welcome new members, make presentations about Crawley U3A and U3A in general.

Mary Russell

List of Equipment held by Crawley U3A available on request to any Group

To find out who holds each item of equipment, go to the U3A website at www.crawleyu3a.org.uk. Open the link to Operating Procedures, scroll down to the foot of page 9 and following, where all equipment, including DVDs etc and their holders is listed.

CD player Bose
CD/DVD/VCR player Philips - for use with PA System
Digital Projector Canon - needs Laptop or Visualiser
Digital Projector Dell - needs Laptop or Visualiser
Digital Projector Hitachi - needs Laptop or Visualiser
Display board NOBO - Velcro pad fixing ONLY
Epidiascope
Flip Chart and Easel, with flip chart pad and markers - MUST ONLY BE USED WITH THE SUPPLIED MARKERS
Folding Notice boards 3 off
Laptops Dell loaded with Microsoft Professional 2off – for use with a Digital Projector
Library of films on DVD - see Operating Procedures - sect 16 - Equipment List
Public Address System - includes 2 radio microphones
Slide Projector and stand

Group Matters

Membership numbers as at 22/9/2011 : 518

Gardening Group (?) - Below is an extract from a letter to all members of U3A from the new subject adviser for gardening – there are many of you who are interested in this subject, perhaps someone would like to contact Anthea and find out more about starting a gardening group in Crawley. With winter coming it would be a good time to get organised for action in the spring!

Dear Fellow Gardeners,

This is just to introduce to you the news that I have taken on the role of U3A subject adviser for gardening, and I hope over the next few months to produce a couple of start up leaflets for those not already with a gardening group in their U3A and thinking of starting one and also to produce newsletters available by e-mail or on the website. I will of course be happy to try and answer any queries you may have by telephone, e-mail or good old fashioned post. With this last method may I ask you to include a sae please.

Anthea Lock, Arondale, Wyson Lane, Brimfield, Nr. Ludlow, SY8 4NQ

Tel: 01584 711065. Email alockl@btinternet.com

English Country Dancing Group –

Leader – Bob Widdell Tel: 01293 536887

English country dancing is good for you - gentle exercise in good company with friends.

Please wear comfortable clothes and soft shoes.

Meetings are held on 2nd and 4th Monday mornings,
10.15am to 12.00pm at St Paul's Church Hall, Northgate.

Next meetings – 28th November
12th December



Scrabble Group - There has been some concern that this group might have to change it's venue but this is not the case: you will be meeting in the usual place.

Crawley U3A Mahjong Group - Annual Report 2010/2011

The Mahjong Group has been running since March 2010 and has grown rapidly over that period.

As a result of the very successful 'U3A 2011 Open Day' we netted eight more members bringing the total now to thirty and with it the need for a Waiting List. We often have up to six tables playing at once and find that to be as much as we can cope with at one time. Although we take our Mahjong seriously, aiming to win and achieve high scores, we also like to make it a fun time with a laugh and a chat.

We like to make our Group a little special and have created a blog called '**Mahjong Moments**': mahjongmoments.wordpress.com/ This not only acts as a diary and record of the weekly sessions but is also useful for members to read when - for whatever reason - they can't get to the meetings. They get to see what they might have missed and who were the top scorers for that week.

Our Mahjong home baked biscuits each week are also quite a feature. Photos are taken now and again to record happy moments and special Mahjong hands. We have quite a large album and it is something we will be able to look back over at our annual party when we get together to eat drink and be merry without a Mahjong tile in sight!

Jane Guest

To all U3A Bridge players

You are cordially invited to a
BRIDGE SEMINAR

on

Losing Trick Count

The meeting will be free and will be held at Fairlawn House, Three Bridges Road
on 10th November at 10.00 am.

ALL WELCOME

Forthcoming Events

Winter 2011-12

National Institute of Medical Research
Annual Meeting on Thursday 17th
November 2011

2.30—4.30pm at the
NIMR, London NW7

Free of Charge—
admission by ticket
only.

First U3A Christmas Concert
With traditional carols and mulled
wine. Featuring the Mosaic
Chamber Choir and Brandenburg
Brass and Organ

Wednesday 14th December 2.30—
4.30pm at St. John's, Waterloo,
London SE1

The Marriage of Figaro
Opera Screening at The Odeon
Cinema, Shaftesbury Ave.,
London WC2H

Tuesday 17th January 2012
12.45—4.45pm

Tickets £12.50pp

Tickets £16pp

Apply for tickets as soon as
possible to:
The Third Age Trust
19 East Street
Bromley, BR1 1QE
Enclose an SAE and make
cheques payable to The
Third Age Trust.

For more information, see the
Members' Area of the website
or contact the National Office:

0208 466 6139

national.office@u3a.org.uk

www.u3a.org.uk

THE THIRD AGE TRUST

U3A

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Future Study Days

19th Nov 2011—“The De La Warr & Andy Warhol Exhibition” to be held at the De la Warr Pavilion,
Bexhill-on Sea, TN40 1DA. Lecturers Dr. David & Dr. Graham Witham.

26 Nov. 2011— “An Exploration of the Life and Times of Franz Schubert” to be held at St. Mary's Social
Centre, Christie Road, Lewes BN7 1PJ. Lecturer: Jak Baksi

3rd Dec. 2011— “Through the Artists' Eyes “ to be held at the Village Hall, Swan View, Pulborough, RH20 2BF.
Lecturer: Kay Blackburn

There will be two study days of particular interest to Crawley members as they will take place locally:

21st January 2012— “Sussex Industrial History—Different Perspectives “

Lecturer: Geoff Mead

3rd March 2012 — Greeks & Egyptians: Egypt under the Ptolomies (30—305 BC)

Lecturer: Sian Thomas

Further details will be on the booking forms available at the Friday meeting 9th December,
or from Brenda Broom, 01293 82674

**VELASQUEZ AND GOYA -
The golden age of Spanish painting**

Saturday 1st October saw an enthusiastic group of art lovers gather at Crawley Baptist Church for a Sussex U3A Study Day on the subject of Spanish painting. The lecturer, Leslie Pitcher, is well known to local art aficionados and he produced his usual comprehensive and entertaining account of his subject.

Seventeenth and eighteenth century Spain was ruled by corrupt politicians, beset by a declining economy and ravaged by ruinous foreign wars, yet it was able to produce two of the world's greatest painters - Velasquez and Goya. Our lecturer set out to show us not only the aesthetic qualities of their work but also the insight they have given us into life in the Spanish court and country at the time they lived.

Diego Velasquez (1599-1660) produced great paintings from an early age. In his youth he concentrated on scenes from his own experience – details of everyday life, particularly in the domestic sphere, sometimes placed in biblical settings. He made such an impression that he was summoned to the court of King Philip IV, which gave him not just the opportunity to make a name for himself but also to study the works of earlier masters. When the king sent him on a visit to Italy, his exposure to the art and culture of that country profoundly influenced his style and subject-matter. On his return he introduced subjects from classical mythology into his work – a reflection of the great Italian masters. However, from this point on Velasquez is seen to concentrate on scenes of life in the Spanish court, and especially portraits of courtiers and the royal family - Philip IV, his short-lived son Baltasar Carlos and his small daughter the Infanta Margarita Teresa. His paintings display acute powers of observation and an extraordinary talent for capturing personality. They allow us intimate glimpses of a closed world.

Leslie shared many excellent slides with us, including the famous portrait of Philip IV in brown and silver, the group scene Las Meninas (sometimes described as the greatest painting in the world) and the



Las Meninas— Velasquez

Rokeby Venus now in the National Gallery.

After lunch the lecture moved on a century and a half to the work of Francisco de Goya (1746-1828), which has both similarities and contrasts with that of his illustrious predecessor. Goya used to say that he worked from

Nature, Velasquez and Rembrandt and it is not difficult to see what he meant.

His early works featured genre representations of everyday life, which our lecturer pointed out belied the common perception of Goya as an artist of gloom – light and energy shine through these pictures. He also painted the Spanish royal family of the time and portraits of important personages, including the Duke of Wellington and the beautiful depiction of his friend Doña Isobel de Porcel, her face framed in her exquisite black mantilla. But, unlike Velasquez, Goya had personal experience of the turbulence of war and revolution. In his later pictures the effect these had on him is obvious – so often a mood of depression permeates the black and melancholy subjects he chooses, and, as our lecturer showed, even a cloak of mythology cannot obscure it.



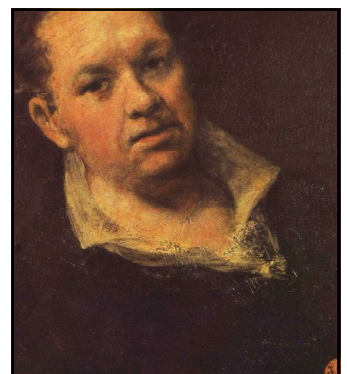
All in all, the study day was an enlightening and thought-provoking experience; at its conclusion grateful thanks were expressed to Leslie Pitcher for his much-appreciated presentation.

Roger Gibson



Self-portrait, 1640
Velasquez

Self-portrait, 1815
Goya



Out and About Group 1 Visit to Syon Park

We set out for Syon Park on a lovely sunny day, coincidentally meeting up with Group 3 at Three Bridges station. It was a good thing they were headed for London Bridge whereas we were headed towards Victoria, otherwise the train would have been overrun with U3A members!

On arrival at Syon Park, which has been in the Duke of Northumberland's family for four hundred years, we were a little disappointed with the exterior of the house. Although impressive it was very plain, square with a crenellated roof line, looking like a mock castle. However, there was a "wow" factor as soon as you went inside. Robert Adam was commissioned to remodel the interior of the existing Tudor House and started work on the Hall in 1762. His job was not made easy as he was not allowed to alter either the ground levels, the general layout of the rooms or the main structure. We went straight into the Great Hall the design of which is based on a Roman Basilica; the floor is of black and white marble in a geometric pattern. At the end of the hall leading up steps to the Ante Room is a particularly fine bronze statue "The Dying Gaul".

We went next to the Ante Room. It had a wonderful floor of highly polished scagliola, which is a composition of marble, fixing materials and colouring matter, in bright colours, green, red and gold, incorporating a bold flower pattern, put that together with the gold leaf patterned ceilings and the frieze with life size figures all coated in gold leaf, and green marble columns all round the room and you have something very special. The dining room followed, not as showy as the previous room, but very elegant. It is 66 feet long and could easily seat 60 people.

The next room we visited was the Red Drawing Room. So called because the walls are covered in Spitalfield crimson silk, probably re-woven in the 1820s and reversed and rehung in 1965 following conservation work – clever! For me the eye-catching feature of this room was the coved ceiling, decorated with 239 medallions of Arcadian scenes painted by Cipriani – he was paid £2 per medallion and his request to be paid more for medallions picturing more than one figure was refused by the Duchess. The carpet complements the ceiling. We went on to the Long Gallery 136 feet long by 14 foot wide. Again wonderful decoration. The walls are lined with books, 3000 of them. A sweet little boudoir leads off one end of the Gallery. The windows of the Long Gallery look over the garden, which is separated from tidal water meadows by a ha-ha, then, not visible because of a raised bank, the River Thames and beyond that Kew Gardens.

The rooms I have mentioned are the main rooms – all on the outside walls. The house is built round a courtyard. The rooms on the inner side facing into the courtyard are those used by the family when visiting Syon. Some of these rooms were also on view

to the public. They were smaller and more intimate, although the private dining room was very grand with a delightful chandelier, designed as a fountain with three entwined dolphins spouting jets of water.

We did go upstairs, somewhat of an anticlimax after downstairs. The two bedrooms on display were furnished for the young Princess Victoria and for her mother the Duchess of Kent.

I have only covered the main rooms; every room contains wonderful statues, paintings and antiques, far too numerous to describe.

The audio guides provided were excellent, but the enthusiasm of the guides on duty in the rooms was very apparent and the snippets of information they added made our visit all the more enjoyable.

History is laid out before you at Syon. The Romans crossed the River Thames near here. The Tudor house was built on the site of Syon Abbey, founded in 1415, which at the time of the Dissolution was the tenth richest in England. So many characters we read about in our history lessons have passed through the doors of Syon.

Not only is it the house that is wonderful, the grounds are lovely. We were fortunate in having a beautiful day for our visit and took a walk around the lake and visited the magnificent Great Conservatory.

Attached to the house is a superb Garden Centre, you would think this would detract from the house but it did the opposite and a cup of tea in their café rounded the day of nicely.

All in all it was a very good day out.

Sheila Leedale

Something to make you smile! These are real newspaper headings!

Miners Refuse to Work after Death.

No-good-for-nothing lazy so-and-sos!

Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant

See if that works any better than a fair trial!

Enfield (London) Couple Slain: Police Suspect Homicide

They may be on to something!

War Dims Hopes for Peace

I can see where it might have that effect!

Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over

What a guy!

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks

Do they taste like chicken?

Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half

Chainsaw Massacre all over again!

Thanks, Don.

Art & Heritage Tour 2011

Once again, the members of the Art Appreciation Groups and Painting & Drawing enjoyed a Tour of the Palaces of the Peak District organised by Art & Heritage Tours Ltd at the end of September. The company were not responsible for organising the weather but as you may remember it was a gloriously warm and sunny period.

We stayed at a hotel near Belper which, to judge by its name, had been a manor house in Victorian times and in its modern guise still presented that air of solidity and comfort. In the four days, which included the days we travelled from and back to Crawley, up to seven visits to various stately homes were included so it was a very busy schedule. Before we arrived at the hotel, therefore, we stopped off in Warwick to visit the Collegiate Church of St Mary and the Beauchamp Chapel which included some very old tombs and stained glass.

After a quick dash for a take-away lunch (Marks & Spencer's obliged) we were off to Hardwick Hall and could very well understand on arrival why the phrase always follows the name, i.e., Hardwick Hall – more glass than wall. It is a stunning building and looked marvellous against the perfect blue sky. It was built by Bess of Hardwick, aka Countess of Shrewsbury, who was a very astute lady and married four times and each time the husband died she got richer. She ended up as the second richest woman in England after Elizabeth the First. The house was very grand with a huge High Grand Chamber which was very impressive. A number of the stewards were around ready to give lots of information and they were dressed in the Elizabethan style. We were told that the ladies had made their own dresses, by hand, no machining and were allowed to wear them on the last Thursday of the month, so we were able to see them in all their glory.

Inevitably we ended up in the café for a desperately needed cup of tea and then it was on to the coach to our hotel.

On Friday, 30 September we went to Chatsworth. Once again, it was a beautiful day and there was an opportunity to tour the house, tour the gardens and take in an exhibition of sculpture, take a buggy ride round the enormous grounds – the choice was ours. After lunch there was the chance to go to Matlock Spa and to go in a cable car up to the Heights of Abraham. Those in the party who did go reported having had a thoroughly enjoyable trip with wonderful views. Chatsworth House is an incredible place, absolutely huge with something like 360-odd rooms; most of those that we saw were packed

with antiques of every kind. Over the final absolutely essential cup of tea the conversation went on the lines of "Did you see ...", "What about ...", "Who does the dusting..." etc. Sleep came easily that night.

On Saturday, 1 October we had an early start for our visit to Bolsover Castle. This castle is so different to Chatsworth – to start with it's empty ! It had fallen into disrepair and had only recently been refurbished. It was on the top of a hill and had a wonderful view over the surrounding countryside. A lot of the buildings were just walls and no floors but the Little Castle had been built on the ruins of the old one in the 17th century and was on a small scale. There was a fantasy feeling about it and it was delightful. Absolutely no furniture or ceramics but a few paintings.

After lunch in the new visitor centre it was time to move on to Kedleston Hall which was a total contrast to Bolsover Castle. This was a Robert Adam showpiece and his style covered everything, ceilings, decorations, furniture, building etc. It was huge and beautiful, designed to impress. Apparently the main building was never meant to be lived in (the East Wing was for that) but was used for entertaining royalty and the aristos. Once again, it was a beautiful day so after tea in the café we wandered outside and viewed the landscape complete with bridge over a river and sheep grazing – just as Capability Brown had planned.

Sunday arrived all too soon and it was time to make tracks home but not before we stopped in Leicester to visit the Leicester New Walk Museum and Art Gallery. This was housed in an old classical building but inside it was totally modern. There was an interesting exhibition of Picasso's ceramics and a gallery with a good collection of more traditional paintings. There were a number of other galleries housing Ancient Egypt, Dinosaurs and World Arts. So much to see and so little time. Crawley called and regretfully we had to go. The end of a lovely trip.

Beryl Sinclair



*Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire.
built in the 1590s*



Bolsover Castle – the Star Chamber



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

U3A CRAWLEY—Officers and Committee -

Chairman	Gillian Pitt		gillian.p34@yahoo.co.uk
Vice-Chairman	Mary Russell		mary.russell14@virgin.net
Hon. Treasurer	Edwin Cowley		eandbcowley@talktalk.net
Hon. Secretary	Beryl Sinclair		beryl.sinclair@tiscali.co.uk
Groups Co-ordinator	Barbara Hanson		bjhanson@btinternet.com
Membership Secretary	Betty Dowty		elizabethdowty@tiscali.co.uk
Newsletter Editor	Jean Kirby		jeankirby1@virginmedia.com
Monthly Meeting Speakers	Douglas Mayne		maynemd@etinternet.com
Merchandise, Study Day Forms	Brenda Broom		
Committee Member, Outings Organiser	Jo Slack		j-slack@blueyonder.co.uk
Committee Member, Outings organiser	Margaret Shaw		shaw4tb@btinternet.com
Co-opted member Webmaster, IT organiser	Don Sadler		don.sadler@blueyonder.co.uk
Co-opted member, Outings Organiser & Exhibitions	Pam Binns		david.binns2@tiscali.co.uk

**Refreshments:
Peggy Miller and team of helpers**

Spring and Summer Outings

At present, both these outings are organised using the brochures from the company called "City and Villages Tours". While this firm has been an excellent source of ideas, and has provided excellent service, the U3A committee members who set up the outings feel that it might be interesting to have a look at what some other brochures have to offer. One problem is that members do not want to spend too many hours in the coach getting to the destination, which restricts the options to a certain degree.

If any members have come across tour brochures that might be of interest, please contact any of the Outings Organisers listed above.

Group Name	Group Leader	Phone Number
Amblers	John Martin	
Art Appreciation 1	Mary Russell	
Art Appreciation 2	Mary Plastow	
Art Appreciation 3	Ann Flack	
Bamboo Pipes	Patsy Edmond-Smith	
Book Circle 1	Eunice Clement	
Book Circle 2	Jean Austin	
Book Circle 3	Jo Slack	
Bridge for Fun 1	Betty Dowty	
Bridge for Fun 2	Pauline Rigby	
Circle Dancing	Audrey Gwynne	
Craft Circles 1 and 2	Sheila Newbie	
Creative Writing	Pat Bethel	
Digital Photography	Edwin Cowley	
English Country Dancing	Bob Weddell	
Family History	Jo Meek	
Film Circle 1	Margaret Shaw	
Film Circle 2	Jennie Connell	
History	Elizabeth Robinson	
Italian	Lorenza Davis	
Literature	George Redgrave	
Mah Jong	Jane Guest	
Music Appreciation	Henry Lyons	
Out and About 1	Sheila Leedale	
Out and About 2	Winifred Waterworth	
Our and About 3	Irene Fairbourn	
Out and About 4	Maggie Berrill	
Out and About 5	June Britton	
Paint and Drawing	John Martin	
Play Reading	Shelagh Smith	
Poetry	Joan Harding	
Poetry, Prose and Plays	Keith Bergin	
Science	Douglas Somerville	
Scrabble	Anne Finley	
Singing for Pleasure	Eileen Thompson	
Story Telling	Jo Slack	
Swimming	Pat Bethel	
Topical Discussion	Maureen Dawkins	
Walkers	Mavis Liddell	

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